Analyzing The Combination of Private Marketing in Traditional Catering Retail: Take Holiland as An Example

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Abstract. The impact of the COVID-19 and the promotion of Internet applications have increased the online consumption rate of consumers, which has prompted businesses to conduct private marketing. The purpose of this study was to explore how the traditional catering retail industry combines with private marketing. This paper used marketing mix theory, through the SWOT model, to specifically analyze the characteristics of Holiland's in four aspects: price, product, place, and promotion. The results showed that Holiland has advantages in the product, location, and promotion, but its price is higher than that of the same category of products, so it has disadvantages. The market where Holiland is located has great potential, however, due to the continuous participation of other industries, the competition is fierce. Holiland needs to constantly introduce new products and adjust its marketing model to make its own brand image more prominent. According to such case studies, other traditional catering retail businesses can imitate the private marketing model and some specific measures of Holiland, but they need to change some details according to their own industry characteristics and product features to form their own private marketing model.

Keywords: Private marketing; marketing; Marketing Mix theory; traditional catering retail.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Private domain traffic has suddenly become the center of the marketing industry, with many companies starting to focus on and engage in private domain marketing [1]. Holiland seized this marketing opportunity and successfully transformed the brand towards youthfulness.

The year 2019 is a time when private domain marketing is growing rapidly. One of the main factors driving the development of private domain marketing is the popularization of digital technology. The concept of private traffic has emerged at the same time as the global emergency of COVID-19 when digital technology continues to evolve. Private domain traffic marketing is defined as directing public domain traffic to private domain traffic to increase brand value or obtain commodity revenue by meeting customer requirements and operating customer relationships [2]. From these concepts, it can be concluded that private marketing can select customers more accurately, and enterprises can increase customer dependence through customer service and other behaviors. One of the characteristics of private domain marketing is exclusivity [3]. Users within a brand domain are basically not shared with other brands, and there are few connections between each user. Another feature of private domain marketing is that users can be contacted repeatedly [3]. Private marketing through WeChat official account and other social media channels to send information and the information can be conveyed to users anytime and anywhere, which can ensure long-term stable user maintenance.

1.2 Research Gap

Several studies have been focusing on Holiland. Chen analyzed the branding strategy of Holiland [4]. Chen states that Holiland's internal management, Holiland adheres to a flat system and most of the stores are directly operated, and this approach has improved operational efficiency [4]. Cao et al. have likewise made some studies on the Holiland brand, with their specific research focusing on the brand effectiveness of Holiland. They concluded that on the supply side, financial resources, human
resources, technical resources and service attitude make Holiland's brand image good and consumer satisfaction high [5]. On the demand side, consumers have high trust in Holiland brand in terms of taste, nutritional value and freshness, pastry appearance and packaging [5]. Cai and Li's research paper focuses on Holiland's co-branded marketing. They point out the necessity of co-branding marketing in the Internet era and the current status of co-branding marketing in Holiland [6]. These scholars have mainly focused on how to apply traditional marketing methods or new forms of co-branding to build brand image and maintain brand reputation. There is a lack of research on the use of private domain marketing methods for brand maintenance and precision marketing.

On the other hand, the research and application fields of private domain marketing are mainly focused on the combination of physical books and with e-commerce. Yi was the first to point out in 2019 that private domain marketing is the mainstream of marketing in the next few years, especially in the field of e-commerce [7]. He states that the private domain traffic of e-commerce platforms such as RED, Ttiktok, and T-mall will be of great interest, and carries out the impact of information released by Key Opinion Leaders on social platforms on private domain marketing [7]. Zhang applies private marketing to the brick-and-mortar bookstore industry, exploring the challenges of implementing the "Book Plus" model and the transformation of brick-and-mortar bookstores under the impact of the epidemic [8]. In addition, she summarized the methods of private domain marketing channels and private domain marketing methods [8]. Bi also presented her views on the combination of private domain marketing and e-commerce. She mainly researched the private domain marketing measures of NetEase Hand-picked's e-commerce platform, summarized and analyzed the mode of NetEase Hand-picked's private domain traffic operation in three aspects: acquisition, retention, and realization of private domain traffic [9].

Current academic models and applications for emerging private domain marketing are mainly focused on live e-commerce approaches and are combined with very limited industries. There is a lack of case studies and applications combined with the traditional restaurant retail industry. Furthermore, the offline sales of the traditional restaurant retail industry were subjected to negative marketing due to the factors mentioned above, such as the impact of the new crown epidemic and the decrease in new Internet users. As a result, this industry has had to transform its marketing strategy and explore how to utilize private domain marketing to recover sales. Therefore, how private domain marketing and traditional restaurant retailing can be combined will be the main research question of this paper. This paper will investigate what channels traditional restaurant retailing can apply to reach consumers directly and how to strengthen users' dependency to reduce the cost of maintaining them. In addition, the paper will examine how traditional restaurant retailing can enhance brand awareness, increase brand value and improve the ultimate goal of marketing through private domain marketing. Through this study, some directions for improvement will be proposed for the traditional catering retail industry: transformation through private domain marketing, broadening sales channels and focusing on enhancing brand value. Some traditional catering retailers can also refer to the characteristics of the two cases analyzed in this paper and imitate or innovate their own private domain marketing programs. In addition, this study can fill the gap in academia on the combination of private domain marketing and traditional retail industry and provide a theoretical and case basis for marketing in other industries.

1.3 Fill The Gap

This article will review the Marketing Mix theory and conduct a case study with Holiland as the target. The analysis method is SWOT, mainly analyzing its private domain marketing strategy and specific measures taken, and summarizing the general private domain marketing implementation model, which provides a reference for other traditional restaurants retail industries.
2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition

The Marketing Mix theory was first proposed by Edmund Jerome McCarthy in 1960, who outlined the elements of marketing strategy as Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, also known as the 4Ps theory [10]. As society progressed, Booms and Bitner expanded the 4Ps to 7Ps in 1981, namely Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical evidence [11]. The change from the 4Ps marketing theory to the 7Ps theory reflects a more complete marketing strategy for producers in the industry chain, however, these elements exist on the production side of the aspect, without the consumer as the core of marketing. Therefore, after the 4Ps theory, Robert Lauterborn proposed the 4Cs theory in 1990, which is Consumer, Cost, Convenience, and Communication [12]. These four elements correspond to the four elements in the 4Ps: consumer corresponds to the product, cost corresponds to the price, convenience corresponds to place, and communication corresponds to promotion.

In the 4Ps theory, a product is defined as the goods and services offered by the producer. Price is the cost that the producer sets that the customer needs to pay. The place is defined as the place where the producer plans to market the product, which includes locations such as cities or villages, malls, and supermarkets, online or offline. Promotion is defined as the channel and the way in which the sale is conducted, which can be traditional paper media or the now popular social media campaigns. In the 4Cs theory, consumers refer to the target group of goods produced by producers, who usually bring demand and consumption preferences. Cost is defined as the price of a good that is willing to pay for a particular type of good from the consumer's point of view. Convenience refers to the accessibility of consumers at the time of purchase and use, which includes convenience at the pre-sale, purchase, and post-sale stages. Communication is defined as the interaction between consumers and producers as a way to realize information symmetry and establish a strong customer relationship.

2.2 Important Results

In the Marketing Mix theory centered on the manufacturer, the element of the product is one of the most intuitive information that consumers can see, so it is important to ensure the quality of the product. Especially in the chain food industry, consistency of quality control and freshness of raw materials is the first thing that businesses should consider and focus on [13, 14]. Palmieri and Perito, in their study of Italian consumers' willingness to consume wine, concluding that consumers care a lot about the origin and quality of the grapes [15]. In the study of online purchase intention of fresh produce, Cang et al. used Amos structural equation model to analyze the data collected online and concluded that product quality has a significant effect on consumers' consumption intention [16]. Gabriel et al. on the intention to consume organic food, by applying the theory of planned behavior, concluded that one of the main reasons for consumers to buy organic food is that they perceive it to be of higher nutritional value and better quality [17].

Price is another commodity information that consumers can directly focus on. As with the prices talked about above, consumers have already formed a price they are willing to pay before making a purchase. Chen et al. analyzed the marketing strategy of McDonald's in China and India through the 4P model and concluded that the catering chain brands need a unified price [15]. Li et al. are studying the effect of price on consumer satisfaction when consumers purchase telecommunication intermediary services [18]. They used methods such as Discriminant Validity and sensitivity of multicollinearity to process the data and finally concluded that there is a positive relationship between price and consumers' consumption behavior [18]. Hussain and Eman, when exploring the impact of price on consumer behavior in Saudi Arabia, concluded through questionnaires and data analysis that appropriate low prices can increase sales [19].

The place is the aspect of the business that needs constant adjustment. This is because the environment in which other brick-and-mortar stores such as shopping malls can open is constantly changing from city to city and from point to point. Chen et al. analyzed the marketing strategy of
McDonald’s in China and India through the 4P model, and concluded that chain catering brands need to constantly adjust the location of stores to match the brand positioning [14]. When analyzing the consumption of organic food, Gabriel et al. found that the place of sale is one of the factors that affect consumers’ willingness to consume [17]. Ma et al. pointed out that the combination of online and offline marketing channels can realize better marketing results when exploring a new marketing model [21].

In addition to this, social and technological advances can generate changes in consumer preferences for marketing models. Tabassum and Jabir used stratified random sampling technology to conduct a structured questionnaire survey and a poisson regression model to analyze data when exploring consumers’ willingness to pay for healthcare products. It was concluded that sales in physical stores had little impact on consumers’ willingness to spend [20]. Similarly, Don and Edward put forward the term the consumer networks and negotiation approach when conducting marketing communication in emerging markets, and concluded that the existing marketing model is no longer suitable for the current business environment, and new social media and digital promotion can realize better results [13]. Ma et al. pointed out when analyzing the new marketing model that the combination of online and offline promotion models can also enable the brand to continue marketing and improve the effect of dual marketing of products and brands [21].

2.3 Summary

Based on the above conclusions, the marketing mix theories are combined and the elements corresponding to both are used to measure Holiland’s moves in the private domain marketing process. Consumer preferences and needs will regress Holiland to design and produce target products, consumers’ expected cost of products will influence Holiland’s pricing and price adjustment, the number of stores Holiland opens and online shopping platform can enhance customers’ consumption convenience, and Holiland’s marketing channels and user surveys can conduct two-way information communication to convey product information to consumers while obtaining consumers’ consumption feelings.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

SWOT analysis is based on an enterprise’s internal and external competitive environment and situation analysis under competitive conditions. It is to list the main internal strengths, weaknesses and external opportunities and threats that are closely related to the research object through investigation, arrange them in matrix form, and then apply the idea of systematic analysis to analyze the various factors to match each other, so as to obtain the future development strategy and development direction of the enterprise. It can be seen that SWOT is an analysis method, which is usually used in the first step of policy management, namely the analysis phase. At this stage, the organization will look forward to the vision, set goals, and analyze the environment [22]. In the process of analyzing the environment, SWOT is an efficient tool, which can clearly sort out the internal and external environment of the enterprise, and evaluate and adjust the set goals. As an analytical technology, it plays an important role in marketing, public relations, advertising and any field requiring strategic planning. And it has many advantages. First of all, the SWOT model can be considered comprehensively. Before analyzing each aspect, the organization's managers need to collect a large amount of data and information, and classify this information into internal strengths, internal weaknesses, external opportunities and external threats. This process ensures the strictness of logic and makes the consideration more comprehensive. In addition, such analysis is scientific and systematic, but it will not cost much money. This kind of analysis only needs professional managers to evaluate. Therefore, when exploring Holiland’s private marketing, the author uses this analysis method to comprehensively explore Holiland’s existing marketing behavior.
3.2 Holiland

Holiland was founded in 1992, the headquarters was first set up in Lanzhou and then moved to Beijing. Nowadays, it has hundreds of millions of yuan of fixed assets and more than 10,000 employees [22]. The founder and current CEO is Luo Hong. Holiland mainly produces and operates cakes, bread, pastry, Chinese desserts, coffee and beverages, moon cakes and other products, which has nearly 1,000 directly managed chain stores in more than 70 large and medium-sized cities across China [22]. It is the head of the bakery chain industry in China.

In 2017, some substandard stores and the headquarter disagreed to make independent investments and operations after the brand upgrade of stores by Holiland headquarters [23]. This has led to the emergence of counterfeit “Holiland” in early 2019, often in the view of consumers. This forced Holiland to immediately transform: the launch of new products co-branded with HEYTEA and private domain marketing to convert user traffic. In the 2019 New National Products list, Holiland received the highest support in the baking industry segment. In fact, as early as 2015, Holiland has been transformed in terms of products [23]. Holiland introduced the then popular Japanese pastries and launched products such as semi-cooked cheese and Hokkaido cake. The half-cooked cheese brought great success which can bring more than 7600 turnovers to a single store. The best-selling of these soft spots drove Holiland’s overall turnover, thus contributing to the expansion of Holiland’s stores. In 2018, sales in Beijing had tripled, where Holiland has the largest number of stores. In 2019, Holiland once again set up a directly managed store in Shanghai [23].

3.3 SWOT Analysis

3.3.1 Strength

In terms of internal strengths, Holiland products have internal strengths. First, Holiland’s products are fresh and well-transported and stored. Holiland has good product quality control and a consistent distribution mechanism to ensure product quality in each physical location. Online flagship retailers also supply. It has factories in various major cities. Fresh, cold-chain-transported products on the day reduce food deterioration and preserve flavour. Holiland calls this "front store and back factory". Holiland also categorizes consumers by user traits and adds new products. Holiland offered bread and cake in enormous quantities at initially, but they only lasted until dinner. After the user survey, some consumers need afternoon tea or meeting snacks. Later, Holiland sold cookies with extended shelf lives and exquisite appearance, afternoon tea cakes, and freshly made bread, cake, coffee, and other products as dinners. Most Gen Zers value freshness. Thus, Holiland is typically co-branded (IP). For instance, Holiland-Harry Potter and Holiland-Ovaltine pastries. Product development creates blind box cakes and follows user trends. Summer green bean cake and Christmas half-cooked cheese are seasonal items.

Holiland also benefits Place. Holiland markets online and offline. Offline, Holiland attracts customers with a white exterior and pleasant window lighting and offers a basic white packaging box. In some places, Holiland Lab stores are decorated in a modern gray industrial style, whereas Holiland Pink stores are pink and pleasant. These stores are Holiland's online hit spots, catering to users' preferences and attracting customers. Holiland combines big data and artificial intelligence to accurately evaluate each user's real-time demands and long-term preferences and position adverts on their social media and other channels. Holiland can track user A's social media searches for bread or dessert and place product advertising. Holiland also works with RED and Weibo bloggers to advertise new or anticipated explosive products. Then these bloggers' fans will get and consume the ads. Official accounts will also market products on WeChat Public and RED. Ads will target these accounts' followers. Thus, Holiland increases user stickiness and loyalty. Holiland also capitalized on Chinese fashion and target customer interests. Launch premium activities and limited products during traditional festivals to build brand recognition. This campaign makes Holiland a trend by making its items younger and more unique. Holiland promotes the product as a carrier to promote the brand.
3.3.2 Weakness

Holiland has its own flaws as well. Holiland's shortcomings include the high prices of its items and the severe brand premium. First and foremost, this behavior is tied to Holiland's user segmentation. The Holiland brand's target users are 18–40-year-olds, primarily women, white-collar workers with a generally stable salary and a high spending income who live in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and other first-tier cities. Second, Holiland's brand is positioned as an upscale baking brand. Holiland combines the brand's midrange and high-end positioning with new advertising, elegant product packaging, and exquisite and little pastries. In 2009, it also launched the luxury cake brand Black Swan, raising the price of Holiland items once again. The prices of Holiland's pastries range from 30-200 yuan, while the prices of bread range from 20-60 yuan, both of which are more than the prices of similar brands' products. Holiland's items are not cost-effective and are not their first choice for clients who have no brand feelings and do not place a high value on the exquisite appearance of their products. Furthermore, in several second- and third-tier cities, many people may see Holiland's products as a living luxury and will be unable to consume them on a regular basis. As a result, with the exception of the first-tier cities, Holiland penetration is limited. Price is one of the product attributes that consumers can directly grasp, and high prices reduce consumers' willingness to consume. According to the aforementioned data, Holiland's price is relatively expensive in the same category, which will have a significant impact on consumers' willingness to spend.

3.3.3 Opportunity

The Chinese baking market is rapidly expanding. Around a late start, China's baking market underwent a period of significant development after 2000. At the moment, China's per capita consumption of baked goods is 7.3 kg, significantly less than the US's 30.3 kg [24]. Furthermore, China's baking business is highly concentrated, with the top five companies accounting for 11% of the market. In comparison, the top five businesses in Hong Kong, China, and Japan with the highest business size in the industry had market shares of 39% and 44%, respectively [24]. It is clear that China's baking sector has enormous potential. The bread market in China has a promising future. According to Mob Institute, the casual snack food business will approach 1.500 billion yuan in 2022, with the bakery and pastry sector accounting for the majority of the casual food industry [25]. Furthermore, the NCBD survey found that the size of China's baking market was 495.7 billion yuan in 2020 and is predicted to approach 600 billion yuan in 2024 [26]. Holiland placed second in terms of store count and second in terms of customer happiness. This demonstrates that Holiland has enormous development potential. Furthermore, once the COVID-19 outbreak was brought under control, the state and government's prohibitions on people's consuming behavior gradually reduced. To help the economy recover rapidly, the government has revised the food hygiene requirements of the food retail business, provided specific development guidelines, and strongly supported the development of the food retail industry in policy. Furthermore, the primary basic materials used in the baking sector are flour, oil, and sugar. The upstream industry is mostly the flour, oil, and sugar processing and manufacturing industries, and raw material supply is relatively constant and ample. Dealers, various sales channels, and end consumers are all downstream of the baking sector. Various large and medium-sized supermarkets, convenience stores and other supermarket channels, professional chain stores, and online e-commerce platforms are the primary sales channels. More bakery firms with professional chain shops as the main sales channel are gradually realizing cross-regional and large-scale network operation with the use of information technology in the field of store management and the development of cold chain logistics systems. These are the external market opportunities available in Holiland. The market potential is enormous, and the brand influence is equally enormous. Such an external atmosphere is favorable to Holiland's future development.

3.3.4 Threatens

Market competition is strong with great possibilities. First, industry and product traits. This industry has substantial homogenous rivalry and extremely repeatable products. Many brands have copied Holiland's half-cooked cheese after its success. These products look and cost less than
Holiland's. Every brand offers various baked classics. Raw toast, Chinese mung bean cake, wife cake. When they see the pastry's shape and name, some consumers don't care about the brand's flavor. This industry's trait. Many firms will copy a successful product, making it less innovative. Second, numerous tea-drinking companies have entered baking, boosting competition. With the rise of "coffee+" and "milk tea+," numerous beverage businesses are making cakes, bread, and other refreshments. Luckin coffee's cookies and pastries, HEYTEA's bread, and Nayuki’s light European bread series. Many tea companies partner with the baked flat shot, which customers see as a fixed collocation and swiftly dominates the market. Mo Mo dim sum and Sexytea. Thus, professional baking brand competition will increase.

4. Results & Discussion

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that the market where Holiland is located has both potential and competition. Holiland should constantly consolidate its own advantages, regularly launch new products, carry out cross-border joint branding according to the preferences of target groups, and launch new products for limited sales at special time nodes. And the current production mode should be continued to ensure the freshness of products. In addition, advertising can be added to existing publicity channels to maintain the current brand image and brand awareness. However, Haolilai can renegotiate the pricing and align the prices of some products that are not very specialized with those of the same category brands.

Through the analysis of the case of Holiland, other traditional catering retail businesses can learn and imitate some marketing methods. First of all, the product itself should be innovated continuously. Brands need to continuously explore the changing preferences of their target groups and launch new products in a targeted manner. The specific implementation plan can refer to the co-branding approach and packaging design of Holiland. Second, based on the product being very attractive, traditional food and beverage retail can broaden online and offline marketing channels. Online channels can repeatedly reach consumers and increase user stickiness. Offline channels can spread the brand concept well and form a stable user base. Both ways can reduce the cost of customer maintenance for enterprises. When operating online channels, brands can refer to Holiland's way of using social media such as RED, Weibo, and WeChat to establish official accounts to promote brand trends and other activities. Moreover, cooperate with the big bloggers on these platforms to use their word-of-mouth and fan traffic for marketing. The brand side can also organize some offline activities, such as parties, to enable users to gather together due to brand recognition. The traditional restaurant retail industry can realize efficient private domain marketing through these two channels, which can increase sales revenue while spreading the brand concept and increasing user recognition of the brand, thus reducing the cost of maintaining users.

Holiland should keep up its product quality and creativity. At the same time, it should monitor the quality of marketing promotion on social media, particularly whether the reputation of bloggers with whom it collaborates has altered. Furthermore, Holiland should lower its pricing to match the average market level in order to compensate for its price disadvantage and increase its market share. To capitalize on market prospects, Holiland should constantly alter its product design direction based on the preferences of target consumers, produce new items on a regular basis, and use social media to promote its brand image. Holiland should strengthen its brand specialization in the face of market pressures. It continually emphasizes that it is a professional brand and an old brand in the baking sector, and it should improve the taste of the product to strengthen the brand image.

This report confirmed certain prior studies on the baking industry's conclusions: customers pay greater attention to the flavor and taste of products, and price would play a crucial part in consumers' decision-making. Furthermore, according to this report, current consumers favor creative products such as cross-border co-branded products and blind box products. This research also adds to some prior findings. According to earlier publications, the baking business should aggressively expand online marketing channels since they are more market-oriented and conform to the consuming
patterns of the key consumers. Offline store decoration is also quite significant due to the features of the traditional food retail industry. This is an offline marketing strategy that can effectively convert public domain traffic and cultivate new consumers.

5. Conclusion

Private marketing is booming in 2019. Internet apps and the COVID-19 pandemic have made private traffic the core of marketing. Holiland capitalized on market trends and made the brand younger. Holiland, founded in 1992, dominates China's baking industry. Over 70 large and medium-sized Chinese cities have nearly 1000 direct chain stores. In 2017, Holiland's headquarters rebranded its stores nationwide. Holiland's private marketing helped it quickly rebrand and grow sales. Thus, this study examines Holiland's private domain marketing approach and how it converts public domain visits into private domain traffic. Based on such study difficulties, this paper first discusses the 4Ps theory of marketing mix theory and analyzes how scholars increasingly add the 7Ps theory as society progresses. Several scholars added the 7Cs theory to the 4Cs theory from diverse marketing chain points. The author analyzes the 4Ps theory's main findings. Price, product, location, and marketing affect consumers' purchasing decisions. This article analyzes Holiland's private marketing strategy using SWOT analysis. Research shows that Holiland has advantages in goods, location, and promotion but disadvantages in pricing. Holiland competes in a huge market with fierce competition. This essay addresses the academic research gap in catering retail by combining private marketing with traditional retail.

Holiland's case study provides private marketing advice and practical solutions for other firms. This study's implementation technique has limitations. This case study draws findings from existing models because the traditional catering retail market sells a wide range of supplies. It may not apply to all sector product categories. Thus, academics must create private marketing implementation based on commodity qualities in future study.

References


