Research on the Influence of Different Advertising Modes on Consumers’ Purchase Intention—Take Bilibili, WeChat and TikTok for example

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Abstract. As social media now enjoys more and more popularity among people, researching how advertisements on different social media affect customers’ purchase intention is of great importance for businesses in conducting marketing campaigns. This article used the literature and comparative analysis method to summarize certain features of different advertisements on three social media: Bilibili, WeChat, and TikTok. The existing problem for Bilibili is the declining advertisement quality, which is caused by excessive commercialization. As for WeChat, the lack of accuracy and entertainment in advertising content leads to a decline in customers’ purchase intention. The problem for TikTok is that the repeating advertisements increase customers’ dislike of the products. In that way, customers are less likely to buy the products. Based on the existing problem, Bilibili suggests providing incentives for uploaders to create more high-quality advertisements. In addition, WeChat should pay attention to precise advertising based on customers’ preferences. In terms of TikTok, it should adopt a new advertising mode, reducing the frequency of the same advertisements.

Keywords: Bilibili; WeChat; TikTok; Advertising modes; Consumers’ purchase intention.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research background

With the fast development of communication technology, social media now enjoys more and more popularity because, through it, people can build and maintain connections with their friends without the limitation of distance. According to the Digital 2021 report, 4.20 billion active social media users used at least one social media worldwide at the start of 2021. Moreover, such a group takes up 53.6 percent of the global population. The number of global social media users has rapidly grown in recent years. Since January 2016, the number has doubled, increasing from 2.31 billion to 4.20 billion [1].

As a platform for people to exchange information, social media satisfies people’s need to keep in touch with their friends and interact with different people and attracts many businesses to conduct marketing activities. Because social media provides customers with a chance to give their comments on a certain advertisement and get immediate feedback from businesses, it is becoming the first choice for businesses when they need to conduct online marketing. For example, businesses can advertise their products by creating an account and sending text or video advertisements to the target group to promote customers’ purchase intention of certain products. Under frequent interaction with businesses, people are more likely to improve their satisfaction and become loyal customers of those brands. Social media has a huge potential business value and good market prospects as a new marketing tool with powerful functions. Predictably, it will attract more businesses to carry out marketing campaigns.

Research on how advertisements on different social media affect customers’ purchase intention is very important. Although advertisements on different social media vary in form and content, certain features in advertisements can positively impact consumers’ purchase intentions. This study
investigates relevant features by investigating advertisements on three social media in China: TikTok, WeChat, and Bilibili. And then, the study will provide some constructive suggestions for businesses to boost customers’ purchase intention.

1.2 Literature Review

Li and Huang found that the content of short video advertisements on TikTok has a significantly positive impact on customers’ purchase intention; however, there are differences in the influence of different dimensions of content. Among all the dimensions, the clarity and entertainment of advertisement content have a significantly positive impact on customers’ purchase intention. In contrast, the utility of advertising content has no significant impact on customers’ purchase intention [2]. Chen proposed that the content of advertisements must be valuable to customers. First, the content needs to include information such as the price and function and even reflect the culture and value of the businesses to affect customers’ purchase intention. In addition, the content should be able to resonate with customers emotionally. The entertainment of advertisement can imperceptibly leave a vivid brand image in customers’ minds [3].

Wu sent questionnaires to collect information about customers’ attitudes towards car advertisements on WeChat. Using SPSS 25.0 to carry out data cleaning and analysis, the perceived ease of use, availability, and special offer positively impact customers’ purchase intention [4]. Wu found that for WeChat marketing, to improve the quality of advertisement on WeChat and expand its influence of it, businesses need to analyze customers’ emotions, such as cognition and willingness to share. The advertisement’s content is the main factor affecting the quality of WeChat Marketing. Hence relevant businesses must pay attention to editing advertisements properly and improving the quality of their content [5].

Peng proposed that advertisements on BiliBili are located at an appropriate position on the whole page with a similar style to other content. In that way, such advertisements won’t lead to apparent incongruity. After designing the advertisement, Bilibili implements precise advertising based on the result of customers’ data analysis. This avoids causing the customer’s aversion to the advertisement and improves the advertisement’s effectiveness, highlighting the user’s sense of experience [6].

Many scholars have pointed out some features of various advertisements on social media through research. In this study, a variety of articles related to advertisement characteristics and customers’ willingness to buy products will be analyzed, and a summary of advertisement characteristics will be presented. In addition, based on the research result, the article will provide constructive suggestions for businesses to optimize advertisements to stimulate customers’ purchase intention.

2. Method

The research method of this paper combines literary analysis and comparative analysis. Firstly, the variable factors and research trends are determined through literature analysis, and the theoretical basis for subsequent research is provided.

2.1 Literature analysis method

Literature analysis refers to the analysis of the relevant literature on a certain topic, and the research is conducted through the relevant literature related to the topic. Collect relevant literature, sort out and extract relevant information, and obtain the nature and situation of the query object. Therefore, questions are raised and resolved based on the relevant information collected. Through literature review, this paper determined the definition of customers’ purchase intention: in customer psychology, consumption intention is called behavioral intention [7], which does not represent the actual behavior of individuals, but represents the customers’ attitude or tendency to purchase a certain product or service [8]. The influencing factors of customers’ purchase intention have always been the focus of marketing research. According to the existing literature, the influencing factors can be roughly divided into product or service factors, customers’ factors, and environmental factors. At the same
time, this paper will systematically analyze the collected literature from the perspective of online word of mouth and advertising models of different platforms. Furthermore, the influencing factors of different platforms on customers and subsequent suggestions are given.

2.2 Comparative analysis

Comparative analysis is a method to compare a group of different analysis objects with certain similar factors. Through comprehensive comparison of their differences in structure, nature, content, process, results, and other aspects, the essential differences of different objects, differences in the phenomenon, and improvement or innovation goals [9]. This paper compares the advertising models of the same product on different platforms through literature to determine which advertising model customers are more willing to accept. For example, two major video platforms, TikTok and Bili, promote their products through video ads, while TikTok generally promotes its products through official video ads. Bilibili, on the other hand, promotes its products through review videos created specifically by vloggers. At the same time, by comparing the amount of advertising for the same product on different platforms, this paper will judge the influence of advertising on different platforms on customers’ purchase intention. This paper will also compare different platforms’ online word of mouth to judge the impact of platform word of mouth on customers’ purchase intention. Finally, this paper will propose a reasonable and efficient advertising strategy and model for different commodities advertising suggestions.

3. Result

3.1 Current development of the Internet advertising market

In the 21st century, with the continuous development of human science and technology, online shopping has gradually become the main shopping mode for customers. According to the “Statistical Table on the Size of Chinese Netizens and Internet Penetration Rate 2016-2021” released by the China Internet Network Information Center, it was concluded that the Internet penetration rate in China reached 1.032 billion people in 2022, accounting for 73 percent of the country. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, there were fewer opportunities for people to engage in offline activities due to the impact of COVID-19. As a result, online shopping became the dominant mode of shopping during the quarantine. At the same time, China’s Internet advertising market is growing. According to the data platform “China’s Internet Advertising Market Size and Forecast 2016-2022” compiled and published by Guanyan World, this study observed that China’s Internet advertising market would grow by 14.40% in 2020, becoming the largest advertising media in China. The size of the Internet advertising market is expected to reach 60.7 percent of China’s advertising market by 2022. The Internet advertising market will become mainstream in the future, and people will increase their online shopping.

3.2 Comparative analysis of Bilibili, WeChat and TikTok

The three Internet advertising platforms selected for this study are Bilibili, TikTok, and WeChat. First, Bilibili was founded in 2009 and ranked No. 1 in the 2017 Mobile Internet Q2 Summer report released by data company Quest Mobile. It can be seen that Bilibili was very outstanding in the Internet field at that time, and this article is also very representative. Bilibili bullet screen is the main content of video bloggers’ free creation. Short video bloggers gain followers by Posting themed videos on Bilibili bullet screens, so most vloggers have their main fan base. Therefore, the main advertising forms of the Bilibili bullet screen are vlog ads and evaluation video ads. The vlog of the Bilibili bullet screen has both the innovation of traditional short video content and the reality of live broadcast content. Its users can interact with creators through bullet screens, coins, likes, comments, and more. This rich form of fan interaction enhances the stickiness between users and vloggers [10]. At the same time, vloggers are encouraged to create more high-quality video content to attract advertisers and realize the realization of fan traffic. In Yang’s concept, Bili Bili’s bullet screen Vlog
advertising format promotes customers’ purchase intention by increasing authenticity and innovation. Vlog advertisements generally capture the daily life of vloggers rather than the traditional advertising model, so customers will be less resistant to the advertising placement and thus promote their purchase intention. At the same time, the fan effect between UP main and short video fans will also have a positive impact on customers’ purchase intention. For evaluation ads, when customers want to buy a product, they can open Bili Bili’s search box and enter the features and name of the product they want. You can see many review videos about the products you want to buy. Vloggers generally evaluate Evaluation videos, and there are many video bullet screens and comments to express their feelings about the evaluation videos. By watching multiple videos, customers can understand the various attributes of the product in more detail, see whether it meets their psychological expectations, judge the authenticity of the product promotion through video bullet screens and comments, and decide whether to buy [11]. Based on A preliminary study on the effect of advertising promotion in evaluation video -- a case study of Bilibili, this paper draws a conclusion: Evaluating the authenticity of video advertising can greatly promote customers’ purchase intention. This study raises questions after comparing the conclusions of the two papers. The unique bullet screen mechanism of Bilibili’s bullet screen advertising platform makes it easy for consumer customer customers to communicate with each other. Still, negative reviews and few reviews will reduce customers’ purchase intention. At the same time, excessive commercialization and interest drive will reduce the video quality of video creators and lead to a decrease in the authenticity of advertisements, which will have a great negative impact on customers’ purchase intention in the long run.

The second platform selected for this study is WeChat, established in 2011 and a free application providing instant messaging services. According to the data platform, Tencent’s financial data show that by December 2021, the number of monthly active accounts of WeChat has broken through 1.268 billion. At the same time, WeChat has become one of the major brands to put information flow advertising platform of choice. WeChat platform advertising mode is divided into the circle of friend information flow advertising and WeChat public number advertising. WeChat circle of friend information flow advertising is placed and presented in WeChat credit. This study finds that the advantage of information flow advertising in WeChat moments is high interactivity. Friends in WeChat moments can leave comments under the advertisement freely, improving the sense of interaction between customers and their friends. As the main function of WeChat is a social platform, the platform itself has been greatly exposed. The advertisement of the WeChat public number is an important carrier for many enterprises to carry out brand publicity and promotion. This study found that the advantage of WeChat public account advertising is low cost, so it can carry out a high advertising output and obtain high exposure. At the same time, the comment section of the WeChat public number can effectively increase the interaction of customers. Therefore, information flow advertising can reduce customers’ uncertainty and promote customers’ purchase intention through interactivity, participation, and high exposure. Through literature Influence of Information Characteristics of WeChat Public Platform on customers’ purchase intention, this study finds that advertising performance and community influence positively correlate with customers’ purchase intention. In contrast, advertising frequency, the uncertainty of perceived benefits, and the uncertainty of perceived risks are negatively correlated with customers’ purchase intention [12]. At the same time, this paper learned the accuracy, interest, benefits, and individuality of the information content from the literature Research on the influence of information flow advertising in WeChat Moments on customers’ purchase Intention -- Based on the mediating role of perceived uncertainty. Through the mediating variables of recognition and emotional brand attitude, intercommunication, interest, benefit, and individuality indirectly affect purchase intention [13]. Therefore, this article believes that the main problem of WeChat platform advertising comes from the lack of accuracy and interest in advertising content, profit, and individuality, which leads to low advertising performance and reduces customers’ purchase intention.

The third platform selected for this study is TikTok, founded in 2016 and is a social software focused on creating short videos. According to the data platform Second Hand System & Haima Big
data, TikTok had 150 million users in 2018. One of the advertising models on the TikTok platform is short video ads. Short video ads on the TikTok platform are divided into two types, hard ads and soft ads. Hard ads are made in collaboration with TikTok officials, which make their videos, and TikTok officials appear at a certain frequency when users scroll through the videos. Soft ads work with TikTok’s vloggers to insert their products into their videos. These two kinds of short video advertisements have the advantages of low cost, strong interactivity, and widespread. The clarity and interest generated by short and new advertising methods promote customers’ desire to buy. According to the TikTok short video marketing research on customers’ purchase intention, the results, and the experimental process, short video marketing advertising content significantly influences customers’ purchase intention. Different dimensions of content have different influences. For example, the clarity and entertainment of content have a significantly positive influence on customers’ purchase intention, while the influence of utility of content is not significant [2]. Through analyzing the experimental data documents, this article concluded that the problem in the TikTok advertising platform is that customers feel fatigued when seeing short video advertisements with similar content. At the same time, the behavior of click farming has produced alertness, which leads to a decline in customers’ purchase intention.

4. Discussion

Based on the analysis of the above platforms, this study summarizes two common problems of the three platforms by analyzing and comparing the literature, namely, online word of mouth and online comments. All three platforms have opened the function of online comments, which effectively improves the interactivity of advertisements on the three platforms. But online reviews are an important measure of online word-of-mouth. The experimental results of the literature An empirical study on the impact of online reviews on customers’ purchase intention are as follows: Answer the lower-income mental representation class factors include perceived risk, in degrees, trust tendency has a positive influence on the impact of online reviews on customers’ purchase intention online comment function value factors including the quantity, quality, comment the titer of also have a positive influence on customers’ purchase intention [14]. This study concluded that Online reviews have an important impact on customers’ purchase intentions. Therefore, this paper believes that the common problem of the three platforms is that online reviews are not well controlled, which will lead to the decline in the quality of advertising content and the authenticity of advertising content, thus reducing consumers’ purchase intention.

4.1 Problem identified and strategy optimization of Bilibili

This paper combines literary analysis and comparative analysis. The literature analysis identifies variable factors and research trends to provide a theoretical basis for subsequent research on the impact of advertising on different platforms on consumers’ purchase intentions. The study compares and analyzes articles from three different platforms to find out the impact of ads on consumers’ purchase intention on the three platforms. The platforms’ nature differed in ad categories, and the three platforms studied were Bilibili, WeChat, and TikTok. The main advertising forms of Beep Beep are Vlog ads and evaluation video ads. The pop-up Vlog ad form of Beep Beep promotes consumers’ purchase intention by increasing authenticity and innovation. Because the Vlog ad form generally captures the daily life of Vloggers rather than the traditional advertising model, consumers’ resistance to ad placement will be reduced, thus promoting their purchase intention. In this study, the authenticity and innovativeness of Vlogger videos have a very strong correlation with the consumer intention of Bilibili Vlog ads, and fans are denser to novel and innovative content and are the main group audience of Bilibili Vlog ads. Therefore, Bilibili should provide some incentives or help to Vloggers’ video creation, taking meeting the audience’s needs as the first factor to incentivize the efficiency and quality of video creation. At the same time, recommending Vloggers with high video quality and innovation on the home page or search bar to push them to the main audience groups and
thus improve the effectiveness of advertising. Many fans have a lot of their own words or suggestions to convey to Vloggers, so most Vloggers have their fan base. To improve the quality and innovation of the video, the platform should provide a special board for Vloggers’ fan base to better focus their suggestions, to help or enter the Vlogger video creation The shortcomings of Vloggers’ videos. In addition to vlog ads, the unique pop-up mechanism of the Bleep advertising platform makes communication between consumers and creators more convenient. Still, negative comments can significantly reduce consumers’ purchase intentions. To avoid damage to the rights of creators, the platform should add an automatic screening function to the pop-up mechanism to automatically screen out negative comments that are subjectively biased. In addition, by adding a more visible reporting function if the creator’s video does cause damage to consumers’ rights and interests, consumers can use the reporting function to defend their rights and interests but to avoid false reports caused by malicious competition. At the same time, the platform should have a person responsible for reviewing the reports’ authenticity, ensuring that the rights and interests of creators and consumers are not infringed. In this way, consumers’ purchase intention will not be negatively affected by subjective negative comments.

4.2 Problem identified and strategy optimization of Wechat

The second platform chosen for this study is WeChat, which has become one of the preferred platforms for major brands to place their infomercials. WeChat has become one of the preferred platforms for brands to place infomercials. There are two advertising models on the WeChat platform: infomercials in the circle of friends and WeChat public number ads. Friends in WeChat Moments can leave messages freely under the ads. This paper argues that the main problems of WeChat platform advertising come from the lack of accuracy and interesting, beneficial and personalized content of ads, which leads to low advertising effects and reduces consumers’ purchase intention. Pushing ads must align with consumers’ needs and interests to solve this problem. Therefore, infomercial ads in the circle of friends should pay more attention to accurate pushing. At the same time, advertisers should base on consumers’ preferences and aesthetic characteristics, as well as whether the content and form are creative and whether the spokesperson of the ad is in line with the audience’s preferences, the factors mentioned above all influence consumers’ desire to buy the products. Innovative advertising forms enhance the interactivity between consumers and advertisements, adding fresh and interesting elements. Such as naked eye 3D cross-screen interaction, following hot events for correlative publicity. For example, in December 2019, Liu Wen launched a photo invitation in her circle of friends as a friend. With her avatar being Liu Wen’s photo and her WeChat name being Liu Wen, together with the expression of her circle of friends, the audience feels that Liu Wen is her WeChat friend. At the same time, Vivo’s ad has the copy “52 friends may see it” to remind the audience that the ad can be seen by WeChat friends and encourage them to comment and like it. The function of free messages improves the sense of interaction between consumers and their friends. Infomercials can reduce consumers’ uncertainty and promote their purchase intention through interactivity, engagement, and high exposure.

4.3 Problem identified and strategy optimization of TikTok

The third platform chosen for this study is TikTok. one of the advertising models on the Tiktok platform is short video ads. Short video ads on the TikTok platform are divided into two types, hard ads and soft ads. The ads cooperate with TikTok officials, who produce their videos and appear with a certain frequency when users scroll through them. Soft ads work with Tiktok’s microbloggers to insert their products in their videos. These two types of short video ads have the advantages of low cost, high interactivity, and wide distribution. The clarity and interest generated by the short advertising approach promote consumers’ desire to buy. However, TikTok’s rigid ad pushing method makes consumers tired of repeating similar short video ad content; at the same time, the act of swiping traffic makes consumers wary and leads to a decrease in their purchase intention. To increase consumers’ purchase intention, the Tiktok ad platform should adopt new pushing methods, such as
analyzing consumers’ use of TikTok to browse small videos. To improve consumers’ purchase intention, the TikTok advertising platform should adopt a new pushing method by analyzing which type of videos consumers have liked when browsing small videos on TikTok. Classifying most videos with the same type of likes and pushing their preferred type of videos vigorously after the next user opens the software meets consumers’ needs and improves their purchase intention.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Findings

This paper studies and hypothesizes the impact of ads on different platforms on consumers’ purchase intention based on the cases of three different platforms. The study finds that (1) excessive commercialization and profit-driven platforms will reduce the video quality of video creators and lead to a decrease in the authenticity of ads, which will significantly negatively impact customers’ purchase intention in the long run. Although the unique pop-up mechanism makes it easy to communicate between consumer customers. However, negative comments will reduce consumers’ purchase intention. In order to improve the quality and innovation of videos, the platform should provide a special section for the creator’s fan base to better focus on consumer suggestions and allow the creator to see consumer comments and feedback. (2) The main problem of low advertising effectiveness on the platform comes from the accuracy of the advertising content and the lack of interest, benefit, and personality, which leads to low advertising effectiveness and reduces customers’ purchase intention. The infomercial in the circle of friends should pay more attention to accurate pushing. Meanwhile, the creation should be based on consumers’ preferences and aesthetic characteristics, whether the ad content and form are creative, and whether the ad spokesperson meets the audience’s preferences. Improving interactivity, participation, and high exposure can reduce consumers’ uncertainty and promote their purchase intention. (3) The platform appearing with the same type of ads will make consumers feel fatigued, and clicking on plowing creates alertness, decreasing customers’ purchase intention. The platform should adopt a new pushing method to classify most of the videos that consumers like and vigorously push the type of videos they like after the next user opens the software to meet consumers’ needs and increase their purchase intention.

5.2 Research Significance

The theoretical contributions of this study are mainly in three aspects. First, this paper broadens the research on the influence of ads on different platforms on purchase intention, focusing on the influence of different ad types on consumers’ intention, focusing on the analysis of consumers’ identification with ad types under different ad types, and broadening the preamble research in this field. Secondly, this paper also combines the subjective characteristics of consumer behaviour (purchase intention) and situational factors (ad type) to enrich the theoretical study of ad type on product purchase intention. Finally, this paper suggests potential recommendations through the results, which point the way to subsequent applications.

5.3 Limitations and Future Studies

Due to the objective conditions, this study has certain shortcomings. (1) Based on the cases of three different platforms, this paper studied and hypothesized the influence of advertising on different platforms on consumers’ purchase intention. Still, the study lacks primary data, and in the future, more in-depth exploration can add surveys and interview to verify the results better.

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