

The problems of Subway's marketing in the Chinese market and how to improve

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Abstract. As a well-known American fast food brand with thousands of chain restaurants around the world, Subway has many flaws in the process of localizing its brand in China. Through research, we found that Subway's marketing problem in the market is a very serious problem, so the problem of analyzing and improving the marketing strategy of the Chinese market has become the subject of this article. In the survey, this paper first analyzes the inadequacies of Subway's marketing in China from the perspective of consumer psychology and social media and then uses the "swot" model to analyze Subway's current strengths, weaknesses, potential areas, and areas for improvement. Combining the Swot analysis with the analysis of Subway's target customer groups and the analysis of Chinese social media audiences, we make two recommendations. One is to make good use of social media and conduct viral marketing on social media. Secondly, sometimes combined with some hot topics in society, such as "body shame", "worker life" and other hot topics, some derivative activities are carried out to improve the world of subway entrances through these topics.

Keywords: Marketing; Swot analysis; Consumer psychology.

1. Introduction

Subway, as a well-known American fast-food brand with tens of thousands of chain stores around the world, not only has its turnover and sales declined in recent years but also has many problems in its localization in China, which has also led to the subway brand [1-2]. In China, the sales volume is much worse than that of McDonald's and KFC, which are also Western-style fast food. In order to study this issue, we have conducted a lot of research and investigation, and we found that an important factor leading to this is that Subway's marketing and publicity have many flaws, which is also the research topic of this article: Subway's marketing problems in the Chinese market and how to improve. Research on this topic is not only because we found that marketing and publicity are very important reasons for a brand to succeed in the market, but also hope to give more localized brands some advice through research on Subway. During the investigation, we firstly analyzed the inadequacies of Subway's marketing in China from the perspective of consumer psychology and social media and found that the Internet was not well utilized, and the content and formation of publicity did not attract and enable Chinese consumers [3-5]. Especially Subway's target customers - young customers buying are the two most serious problems for Subway. And then use the "swot" model to analyze Subway's current strengths, weaknesses, potential areas, and areas that need to be improved. "Swot analysis" is an analysis method to identify and evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of a brand, and through this method can generate strategic insight (cite) for a brand, which helps to better propose the brand's Views [6-7]. Therefore, combined with Subway's own brand, the analysis of Subway's target customer groups, and the analysis of Chinese social media audiences, we give two suggestions. The first is to make good use of social media and use viral marketing on social media. . Secondly, sometimes conducts some derivative activities in conjunction with some hot topics on social, such as "body shame" and "worker's life" and other hot topics, through these topics to improve the world of the mouth of the subway.

The structure of this article is to ask the question first, then analyze the problem, and then solve the problem based on the results of the analysis. In the first section, we conducted an evaluation of the subway from the marketing level, and in the second section, we conducted an evaluation of the subway with swot analysis and combined these contents to give feasible suggestions in the third section.

2. Company analysis

2.1 Company background

Subway is an American multinational fast food restaurant chain that primarily sells sandwiches, wraps, salads, and beverages. As a successful multinational chain, Subway takes "eat fresh" as its positioning. In addition, the freedom to customize your favorite food as topping choices is also one of the features of the subway.

2.2 Marketing strategy analysis

Although Subway is a very successful fast-food chain, its localized marketing in China has big problems [8-9]. First of all, in terms of form, Subway's marketing is mainly in the form of direct advertising. But this method has great limitations because direct advertisements are not issued to improve word of mouth, and there is no way for more people to know and understand the brand. At the same time, in the era of information explosion, most of the advertisements currently placed by Subway in China are still very direct and rigid. They only show the brand image of Subway and induce consumers to consume, without many rich and novel advertisements. Story to attract new customers or resonate with people, so there will not be many new customers attracted by this marketing method, and there is no way to leave a deep impression on many people. On the contrary, many consumers are very interested in these advertisements. There is a rejection attitude, which leads to a low rate of attracting new customers and converting customers through advertising. Secondly, in terms of platform, Subway's target customers are generally young white-collar workers who are very interested in the Internet, but Subway does not use the Internet as a good platform for marketing and promotion. And more choice is to use offline advertising to carry out marketing promotion. For example, on the very popular social APP in China, Subway's related content is far less than that of McDonald's and KFC, two western-style fast food. And its official Chinese website has been mixed in English and Chinese so far, which is obviously very inconvenient for Chinese consumers to read, which indicates that Subway may not regard the operation and promotion of the Internet as a very important thing. important things [10].

From the perspective of consumer buying behavior, most of Subway's consumers are between 20-42 years old and have a certain level of consumption, because compared to other fast food, Subway's price is relatively high. The consumption level of consumers and the positioning of Subway in the market have also led to the fact that Subway's customers are mainly concentrated in first-tier cities or places where second-and third-tier cities are more prosperous. And a very interesting point is that many consumers of Subway are pursuing healthy eating habits, but they don't have a lot of time to spend on eating. Generally, the pace of life is fast and relatively busy.

From the perspective of consumer psychology and behavior, first of all, with the rapid development of the Internet and technology, the efficiency and speed of offline publicity cannot satisfy current consumers, so the Internet has become an increasingly important publicity and marketing platform. At the same time, online shopping has become an increasingly popular way due to its convenience and variety of choices. For example, in the field of western fast-food sales, takeaway platforms have also become a more important way. Both of these points illustrate the importance of the Internet as a publicity platform, especially as Subway's target customers are young customers, and young customers will be more dependent on the Internet. Therefore, Subway does not regard the Internet as an important or even major marketing platform, which should be the first problem in its marketing. Secondly, from the perspective of consumer psychology, Subway should carry out a psychological analysis of the target audience - that is, young customers, and plan marketing strategies based on consumer psychology, so that product design and promotion should meet consumer expectations. of. However, Subway did not take this into consideration when conducting publicity, and only directly transferred the promotional content and advertisements in other countries to the Chinese market, but in fact, there is a certain difference between the consumer psychology of Chinese customers and those of other countries. difference. This is also one of the main

reasons why many Chinese consumers are not attracted by Subway's marketing to buy Subway products. At the same time, in the era of rapid development and even explosion of information, in fact, consumers are more and more repulsive to the marketing content that directly guides customers to consume, so there should be more innovative and interesting content in the design of marketing content. It is the most important point to describe interesting stories and other ways to let people get fun with the content of marketing and then share it with others. It is the most important point to improve the world of mouth. That is also the reason why I agree.

3. SWOT analysis

3.1 Strengths

As a successful fast food chain, Subway has many advantages in itself. First, he has his own unique brand positioning. Fast food restaurants with "fresh" and "healthy" as keywords have their own uniqueness in the Chinese market because many western fast food restaurants are convenient, but fried food over time can cause many negative effects on the body. But Subway's sandwiches are very healthy and fresh. Secondly, as an internationally renowned brand, Subway also has a certain influence. Although localization is not so successful at the moment, it is much easier to cooperate with some well-known IP or brand than without visibility and influence.

At the same time, as a successful brand, Subway is more mature than many brands in terms of brand management and supply channels, and there are not many worrying problems, which reassure consumers.

Finally, the location of Subway is very suitable. Basically, the location is selected in the places with high traffic flow in first-tier cities, such as subways and prosperous places in second-and third-tier cities, because Subway is relatively expensive in the fast food category. Therefore, consumers with certain purchasing power and consumption level are needed. At the same time, because it is fast food, it needs to be in a place with a lot of traffic.

3.2 Weakness

But at the same time, the brand Subway also has certain disadvantages, which prevent its localization development.

First of all, Subway's business model is franchising, and it is difficult to update dishes and menus because all changes need to be unified. But in fact, Chinese consumers are very fond of innovative and changeable content.

Secondly, Subway's products - sandwiches with self-selected inlays - are highly substitutable and have a low technical threshold, which means that many catering brands are also able to develop products with the same positioning.

At the same time, there is a contrast between Subway's product capabilities and marketing capabilities. The speed of marketing cannot keep up with the capabilities of products, resulting in a lack of high visibility and influence among target consumers.

3.3 Opportunities

With the development of society, more and more people are pursuing a healthy diet, which also means that catering brands related to "healthy" and "fresh" will have more and more potential markets. The brand positioning of which and Subway is fit.

3.4 Threats

First of all, more and more western fast food brands choose to open stores in China, and the competition is becoming more and more fierce. Moreover, the price of Subway in the Chinese market is relatively high. Many brands that are already more well-known and influential in the Chinese market are similar. The pricing of the products is relatively lower or the same price as that of Baiwei.

4. Suggestion

4.1 Creative Marketing

Most of SUBWAY's current advertisements in China are still very direct and limited. These ads only show the brand image of SUBWAY, but not through a lot of interesting content, but consumers already dislike or even reject these direct propaganda and consumption-inducing ads, so it is important to change the content of the ads into entertaining and creative content. For example, SUBWAY can make a mv similar to the life of a "laborer" to arouse people's resonance through the "laborer's life", and at the same time, the mv should have funny and interesting contents, so that people will be attracted and even willing to spontaneously promote the product in such an entertaining way. Then implant a bit of SUBWAY's promotion in the MV.

4.2 Combine with hot topics of current affairs

For example, "body anxiety" is a very popular topic on the Internet, and many people have expressed their opinions about this topic. Many people have expressed their views on this topic, and more and more people feel that it is not good behavior to adopt unhealthy dieting methods because of body anxiety. Because the positioning of the subway itself is "healthy" and "fresh", SUBWAY can join hands with some popular social media "net celebrities", especially some fitness bloggers. The promotion of these recommendations will be combined with the hot topics of "body anxiety" and "healthy weight loss", and many consumers may consider eating Subway as a good way to lose weight in a healthy way. Many consumers may see Subway as a good way to lose weight in a healthy way, rather than as a repulsive advertisement.

4.3 Choose the right platform

With the deepening of people's reliance on social media and the accelerating speed of online communication, choosing the right online social platform has become one of the key points for Subway to enhance the world of mouth. Although TikTok has more users than Little red book, the users of TikTok are mainly in the third and fourth-tier cities, which together account for more than 50% of the users, which is not in line with the subway's target This is inconsistent with the target consumer of the subway. Because subway has a relatively high price of Western fast food brands, mainly is one of the necessary conditions for the target consumer is the economy and consumption level is high. While most of the users of Xiaohongshu are users of first and second-tier cities, especially in Guangdong, Shanghai, Beijing, Zhejiang, and other economically developed cities and provinces. At the same time, TikTok users are all-age, although young people account for more, but overall young. Little red book's young users directly occupy more than 85 percent. So compared to TikTok, Little red book is obviously a more suitable platform for the subway to improve word of mouth.

5. Conclusion

But in the process of research, we found that we also found some problems that need to be further solved and discussed. First of all, with the advent of the information age, people spend more and more time on the Internet, and the ability to identify whether it is an advertisement also increases. getting stronger. So how can we not be identified when using viral marketing, and let consumers think this content is interesting, not even as an advertisement. Secondly, hot topics such as "body shame" and "life of migrant workers" are controversial, and activities related to these topics may also deviate from the main point. People only want to discuss, but they are not attracted by the subway. . Therefore, in the next step, we will further analyze the psychology of the target consumers of Subway, and use offline and offline survey methods to find a reasonable range of marketing content, how to more easily attract goodwill instead of negative effects.

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