

Mobile game Marketing Strategy: A Case study of PUBG mobile

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Abstract. This article focuses on the current mobile gaming market and state of the art. At the same time, some current marketing strategies for mobile games are discussed. Many of these methods are widely used. This post focuses on PUBG Mobile. PUBG mobile is a domestic mobile game with anti-terrorism military competition experience type developed by Tencent Photon Studio Group. Moreover, through the four P's method, namely product, price, promotion, and place, the marketing strategy of the PUBG mobile is analyzed. This paper analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of the PUBG mobile and the forms of income. For example, PUBG mobile followed by IP linkage, to give the audience players to different IP linkage effect. It not only propagandizes the IP, but also let the players experience more gameplay, which can be said to kill two birds with one stone. In addition, the PUBG mobile faces problems. It's overpriced, it's one-dimensional. A lot of players who are less willing to pay don't get relatively beautiful skins. Finally, some suggestions for the future marketing strategies of this game are put forward.

Keywords: Mobile game, Marketing Strategy, PUBG mobile.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

With the popularity of smartphones and mobile Internet, mobile games have ushered in a golden age. In the early days, due to the limited function of most mobile phones, the user could only play some simple games on mobile phones, such as snakes, pushing boxes, and so on. However, playing games with excellent picture quality on computers of the same period is possible. With the continuous development of technology, the performance of mobile terminals is gradually improving, and the picture quality and gameplay of mobile games are improving. Because of the portability of mobile games, mobile games are rapidly taking over and occupying the market of online desktop games.

In recent years, the growth rate of mobile game users has decreased significantly. In 2017 and 2018, mobile game users were 554 million and 605 million, but the year-on-year growth rate was only 4.9% and 9.2%, respectively. In 2021, the actual sales revenue of China's game market reached 296.513 billion yuan, an increase of 17.826 billion yuan compared with last year, a year-on-year increase of 6.4% [1]. Mobile games still dominate the domestic game market. At the same time, male players dominated. Female players accounted for a small, basically stable. The domestic game user scale is 666 million, and the number of users is gradually saturated. With anti-addiction regulations, the user structure will become healthier and more reasonable.

1.2 Literature Review

Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman(1977) stated that marketing management is the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of programs designed to bring about desired. Exchanges with target audiences for personal or mutual gain. It relies heavily on adapting and coordinating product, price, promotion, and place for effective response [2]. Thus, marketing management occurs when people become conscious of an opportunity to gain from more careful planning of their exchange relations.

Xu man(2022)has put forward the following marketing strategies for mobile games. In recent years, there have been several female hit games. For the mobile game market, the future of the game market for gamers may focus on the cultivation of buying habits rather than the acquisition of gender traffic

[3]. Meanwhile, Ou Siyi (2020) shows that with the rapid development of the Internet, the connection between the two dimensions of the Internet and real life has become closer, and "crossover marketing" is in complete swing kinds of games. Many game manufacturers hope to achieve a win-win by linking with well-known IPs [4].

Zhan Wenxin and Hu Muzhao proposed (2018) that it is essential to get back to the basics of the game. There are a lot of mobile games in the market that make users buy equipment and other ways to quickly upgrade rather than relying on the user's game strength, which is unfair. Most of the mainstream games on the market do not pay to improve. They speed things up [5].

1.3 Research content and research significance

PUBG Mobile is a domestic game with anti-terrorism military competition experience created by Tencent Photon Studio. It was officially launched on May 8, 2019. In terms of gameplay, it inherited the computer version of PUBG. The e-player parachuted to all corners of the map, searching for weapons, vehicles, and supplies, and fought over various terrain. During the game, a blue circle drives the players to a smaller area where the last player can win. Its revenues are firmly in the top tier of the market.

The computer version of the game was a hit worldwide, often the most popular game on Steam. Until now also has relatively high heat. Therefore, as a mobile game agent of Tencent, it also received significant attention in China. As proven games, the growth in the market has stagnated. Although it has one of the best records, its revenue has not changed significantly from quarter to quarter. Each quarter has maintained revenue of around \$700 million, which is much revenue but hardly any growth. Hopefully, the marketing strategy for PUBG Mobile based on the 4Ps analysis in this article will bring some implications for the game industry. This is also the research significance of this paper.

2. Analysis of the marketing strategy of PUBG mobile

The 4P marketing theory can be summed up as the combination of four basic strategies: Price, Promotion, and Place. Enterprise marketing involves every aspect. It can clearly and intuitively analyze the entire marketing process of the enterprise and is closely related to the product [6].

2.1 Product

Of the top 10 grossing games in the world, all except PUBG mobile are original IP. The PUBG mobile is the mobile version of PUBG, and it got a lot of attention when it was released. It also attracted a large number of students who were interested in the computer version but were not able to play. This novel game mode is different from the traditional game mode. The definition of product differentiation assuming a single homogeneous demand function or limiting the firm's actions to disembodied product characteristics will not lead to the identification of brands for this strategic choice [7]. When people think of FPS games, they probably think of Crossfire, Counterstrike, Etc. On the contrary, when people think of PUBG, the name is immediately associated with the game mode. The company that developed PUBG Mobile is Tencent, which is the most profitable gaming company in the world. At the same time, Tencent is also a Fortune 500 company, which shows that this game has apparent advantages in development and promotion compared with other games. This gives the game a significant edge over other vendors regarding picture quality.

2.2 Price

Unlike the computer version of the buyout system, PUBG mobile games are free. PUBG Mobile makes most of its money selling skins. Skin only affects appearance, not characteristics such as damage. This means that skins do not make a numerical difference to the player, only an aesthetic difference. The price of the skin is usually very high. Its skin is mainly through the lottery mechanism to obtain. The currency needed for the lottery must be obtained with real currency, and no small amount of currency will be given away. Vehicles also have skins due to the presence of vehicles in

the game. Tencent often models cars from well-known real-life brands. Like Tesla, Maserati, Etc. The price of a car skin is also very high, usually about 1,000 yuan.

At the same time, a kind of VIP can be purchased for players with a low desire to pay. Players only need to do a few simple tasks each week, which can be completed by playing every day. Players earn points to claim rewards. Rewards usually include skins, some currency, Etc. It only costs 60yuan and refreshes once every three months. Most players with a low desire to pay for skins will do so rather than through an expensive lottery. Because the cost performance is very high, only 60 yuan can buy much skin. There is also the option to pay for the level of the pass since some players want to get the reward but are short on time.

2.3 Place

PUBG Mobile is available for download in the app market that comes with most phones. It is also available for download on social networking apps such as WeChat and QQ. Almost all Internet users in China use at least one of the two apps. So people can get the game very quickly. Some indie games may only be available through Tap tap, and only a few people know about them.

2.4 Promotion

PUBG mobile has been involved in many collaborative activities across industries. For example, on November 10, 2021, PUBG mobile combined Mobile Suit Gundam SEED and launched a new version of themed gameplay -- Wings of Peace, which launched a series of themed adventure gameplay based on various Gundam IP elements. For example, in the game, find two Gundam icons on the map, and then land near a large gray warehouse, enter the warehouse to find the Gundam robot. Also, on the map, players can see the giant PLANT colonial satellite and the Gundam United Army against the Zaft Army as the player fight. It attracted widespread discussion among gamers and was a top search on Weibo. Not only that but on February 25, 2022, PUBG Mobile was updated with a brand-new version and started a brand-new IP linkage campaign. This series of suits jointly launched with EVA mainly includes the same combat uniform of five famous pilots in the original work. It attracts a lot of middle-aged gamers. The large number of co-movements has helped the PUBG mobile gain much attention, as well as attracted players who are interested in these aspects to play the game. In cooperating with car companies, in the first phase of crossover marketing with Tesla, PUBG mobile perfectly integrated elements such as "Tesla Supercharger Station" and "Tesla theme Store" into the classic island map. In the second phase of cooperation, it implanted Roadster and Cybertooruck models, which were not publicly sold in reality. It also brings more platform user self-dissemination for Tesla.

At the same time, the PUBG mobile will also publicize on the Internet platform. In the micro-blog, sometimes the PUBG mobile will cooperate with the micro-blog. As long as the user clicks on the micro-blog, he can see the activities of the PUBG mobile. At the same time, it will take some forward lottery to attract people to help promote the game.

The PUBG mobile also held PEL events to promote the event. OPPO mobile phone brand is the earliest PEL partner. In this cooperation, OPPO to PUBG mobile and to work together to launch mobile game events with the machine, also introduced a series of activities. At the same time, two entertainers and six top star player team game together, must add a watch, single-game reap super millions of viewers, and for the new product of OPPO brought the attention of millions of mobile phones.

PUBG Mobile also choose to hold some activities offline. PUBG Mobile has built a large theme park on the Songhua River in Harbin. With the help of snow sculpture, ice sculpture, and other forms, many game elements and play items are set up in the park. For example, the frozen birth island is restored by ice and snow sculpture art, a four-person team, and the same vehicle driving project in a go-kart, snowmobile, and other games. They also built a maze made of snow with three exits, which is immersive and fun to explore on site. The Labyrinth View looks like the most iconic "Level 3 helmet" in PUBG mobile, fully implementing the design concept of bringing game elements to life.

3. Suggestions

3.1 Games Can Build Partnerships With Some Brands

According to a survey on several university campuses in Jilin, the overall proportion of female students playing games is relatively high, so the proportion of male students is low, accounting for 27.98 percent, and the proportion of female students participating in the PUBG mobile is 72.02 percent.[8]. Although the sample size of this survey is small, it can reflect that the number of female gamers is not tiny. According to LI raokun, In the current society, women have occupied most of the commercial market. There is a saying that "if you catch women, you will catch the demand". Many commodities are designed to cater to women. Four out of every five yuan spent are by women, according to China's annual consumption data, which shows that 75 percent of total household consumption in the country is decided by women and 50 percent of male-related products are purchased by women [8]. Therefore, the game can be linked with some cosmetics or women's clothing brands. Currently, most game linkage targets are other games or some well-known animation IP. There are very few campaigns for female gamers. For example, King of Glory has partnered with M·A·C to launch five co-branded models, each with different packaging and color numbers. M·A·C cosmetics was founded in 1984 in Canada and spread from North America to Europe and Asia. It has also linked up with L'Oreal. The PUBG can refer to this kind of linkage

3.2 Add Multiple Modes

The mode is relatively simple, and the number of maps is small. Unlike traditional FPS, the size of the map is huge, and the time required to create a map is very long, so new maps cannot be created quickly. For example, games like CS: Go have multiple ways to update their maps. First of all, the game has a long history, and officials can modify the old CS map to enter the new version. There are also authors in the player community who create maps. Players can also set up their servers, and other players can go to other players' servers to play a variety of modes. The PUBG mobile can try to make changes in other ways to get more people to play a game at once. According to a survey by Zhao Zhao Fangyi, the mainstream price of mobile phones owned by college students is 1,000 to 3,000 yuan [9]. And the people he chose were mainly in big cities like Shanghai. For other cities the price will be lower. This shows that most students' mobile phones do not have a good performance. Usually, most manufacturers of flagship phones are more than 4000 yuan, this kind of mobile phones usually have relatively strong performance. But mid-priced phones accounted for the vast majority of shipments. For this type of player, there is usually no need to degrade the image quality during play. At the same time, we often encounter excessive heat and frame drop scenes. The development team should optimize in this area as well.

3.3 Increased Penalties For Cheating Players

Many games have players who are Cheating in the game. Cheating is when a player violates the rules of the game to gain additional advantages and benefits in various ways or to achieve goals that other honest players cannot achieve [10]. Cheating in the game is challenging to prevent, significantly affecting the user experience. First of all, the cost of cheating is meager. It is easy to find free cheaters online, and the cost of registering an account is negligible. However, many other FPS are computer games with configuration requirements for cheaters' computers, and companies ban them more aggressively. For example, the computer cannot play the game after cheating, even if the account is switched. It goes so far as to say that cheating in one game prevents players from playing many games. Therefore, Tencent can increase the intensity of the ban because many online players said that they had encountered a very obvious plug-in, but they have not been banned. Tencent employees, for example, can broadcast live on the Internet, where they can identify reported players for cheating. Tencent can also cooperate with the government or other agencies. For example, in Taobao or other commonly used software, people can easily buy the software needed to cheat. "Purely rely on operators from the technical aspects of the anti-plug-in work still has no small defects, we need to

mobilize the power of all walks of life to fundamentally curb the production and dissemination of plug-ins. Therefore, the development of a complete and effective online game security mechanism (including technology, law, publicity, education, administrative aspects) will be the top priority in the anti-plug-in work" [11].

4. Conclusion

Through the research of this paper, the current situation of the PUBG mobile is analyzed from the perspective of the 4P theory, namely product, price, promotion, and place. The research finds that the income of the PUBG mobile remains among the top several in the world. For example, the pass system can attract many players to pay while maintaining online interaction to maintain the game's popularity. At present, there are still problems with the loss of players. The specific problems are that too many skins lead to the insufficient willingness of players to pay, single gameplay, and too many cheating players.

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