

The evaluation of marketing of Internet celebrity for fashion industry: evidence from Douyin and Xiaohongshu

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Abstract. Contemporarily, internet celebrity has become one of the hottest social phenomena. This paper discusses the impact of Internet Celebrity marketing on the trending industry in today's era of rapid Internet development and the popularity of short videos. The impact on the trending industry is reflected by the introduction of Douyin and Xiaohongshu platforms, and demonstrated by the development stage of Internet Celebrity marketing and the impact of COVID-19 on the Internet Celebrity economy. Ultimately, one can learn that the development of Internet Celebrity economy marketing has a boosting effect on the trendy market. According to the analysis, it has improved the current trendy concept of people, especially the young people in Z-era, hence they can accept more diversified as well as more fresh things. Although the popularity of the Internet can lead to some false values, it is generally manageable and has a positive effect on the trend market. These results shed light on guiding further exploration of economy of internet celebrity.

Keywords: Fashion; Douyin; Xiaohongshu; Internet Celebrity.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of the Internet and the continuous progress and update of network communication technology, more and more young people are deeply influenced by the entertainment culture [1]. It has made their lives more dependent on the Internet. With the support of technology and environment, the diversification of consumer products and the high level of information exchange, the "Internet celebrity effect" and "fan economy" have emerged in due course.

There are four stages in the development of Chinese Internet celebrities. Since 2000, topical internet celebrities mainly focus on literary creation and internet topics, relying on blogs, postings, forums, etc. After 2010, circle-type web celebrities mainly focus on graphics, videos and fan interaction, relying on microblogs and WeChat. Later, in 2016, professional Internet celebrities mainly rely on short videos, live videos, and e-commerce platforms, through live streaming and short videos, etc. From 2020, national Internet celebrities mainly rely on short videos, live videos and e-commerce platforms through live streaming and short videos.

Due to the development of short video and people's love for short video, trendy culture has become popular. Exploring stores, street photography and punching cards are synonymous with the trend of the new era. Young people walking in the city's landmark business districts are the main carriers of this trend. They wear all kinds of urban clothing, and taking pictures, clocking in and "taking pictures" anytime and anywhere has become a daily must. Douban short videos have recorded and preserved their vivid images, and more people are learning various outfits through Douban short videos. Nowadays, with the gradual improvement of quality of life, Chinese people are more inclined to dress comfortably than in the early days, and people turn their attention to how to dress well.

According to TrendLife Trend Report, 64.3% of people who hit the hot spots choose the best outfits when they go out [2]. Little Red Book "Red" has partnered with INNERSECT, one of the world's most influential street culture events, to create a "fashion guide" that provides a strong fashion vibe. The Internet celebrity economy has shown the development trend of industrialization, from the generation of Internet celebrities to the operation and development of Internet celebrities, which has formed its own specific model. Internet celebrity economy companies or incubation companies make the Internet celebrity economy go further on the road to industrialization. In this process, they train ordinary people in the early stage and then sign contracts to eventually become Internet celebrities.

During the interaction process, the Internet celebrity economy company will be more professional and detailed in analyzing the audience. Behind this type of Internet celebrity is a team whose task is to analyze and meet the needs of their fans. In addition, the field of subsequent development of Internet celebrities has been broadened. Previously, the field of expansion of Internet celebrities was relatively narrow, but the development of the Internet has enabled current Internet celebrities to choose various development paths more freely and achieve multi-faceted flowering.

As far as the Internet celebrity economy is concerned, with the gradual application of 5G communication technology, virtual reality technology and artificial intelligence technology, the next windfall is likely to be related to a series of products derived from these technologies [3]. In this case, the Internet celebrity economy has only begun to develop 20 years ago, and there are still many opportunities and room for development in the future that are still worthy of deep involvement. The Internet celebrity economy has brought more things into the public eye and allowed people to experience a more diverse cultural atmosphere. In the era when the Internet was not yet popular, people had little awareness of trendy culture and lacked an atmosphere.

However, owing to the popularity of the Internet celebrity economy, more people started to share stories and contents about trendy culture online, and these people are the so-called "trendy bloggers". As a result, trendy culture gradually came into everyone's view, and people started to pay more attention to their dressing. National trends have also become popular in China. In the article, the impact of internet celebrity economy on trendy culture to the public will be discussed as well as how this affects the perception of people in Generation Z. The rest part of the paper is organized as follows. The Sec. 2 will discuss Douyin and Xiaohongshu's promotion and development of fashion culture in recent years. The Sec. 3 will discuss the development of Early Internet Celebrity marketing economic. The Secs. 4 and 5 will demonstrate the current stage of Internet Celebrity economics and the the impact of COVID-19 on the market of Internet celebrity economy. In the end, there are some limitations and expectations raised with a summary of the study.

2. Basic description of Dou Yin and Xiaohongshu

In 2021, the number of plays of clothing short video content on Dou Yin with keywords related to "national trend" will exceed 4 billion times, an increase of 297.2% year-on-year [4]. The younger generation of consumers no longer blindly worship "foreign trend culture", they have a strong sense of identity and pride in traditional culture and show their fashion attitude with the national confidence of "Chinese style is top". With the rise of Generation Z and the popularity of youth culture, trendy art has moved from niche to mass, taking the world by storm as a new cultural symbol, and a new generation of young artists and collectors is gradually forming. Dou Yin has launched a joint artist campaign, "2021 Dou Yin Trendy Art Project", to spread trends and artworks [5]. Online, Dou Yin specifically developed the product function of "Online Virtual Art Exhibition", launching the first online virtual art exhibition on a domestic social platform and inviting users to "step into" it and watch the exhibition on the Dou Yin cloud [5]. Through the traffic of short videos and web celebrities, mankind can see this activity and participate in it, so that the new culture and attitude of trendy art can have a better dissemination channel.

Differently, the active users of Xiaohongshu are mainly female users, with few male users, and the male target users do not have a deep understanding of the trendy attributes of the platform. Hence, men have a lot of upside in increasing user growth. In Xiaohongshu's recent brand awareness survey, it was found that users' awareness of trendy apparel has increased significantly, and the supply of apparel content has also increased significantly [6]. Thus, Xiaohongshu targeted this trend and decided to use clothing as the hook to drive the trendy atmosphere of Xiaohongshu, which is more attractive to male users. Nowadays, clothing has become a way of expression for people, and it has become a visual business card. Therefore, Little Red Book released short videos about trendy clothing to deepen people's understanding and feeling of trend and clothing culture. Moreover, Xiaohongshu also released the "Annual Inventory of Trends in 2021" in conjunction with Nowre, a trendy lifestyle

media. From Xiaohongshu's trendy lifestyle, such as digital collection, trendy play, sneakers and other trendy art, to national trend, street fashion and clothing, we can see Xiaohongshu's promotion and performance of trendy culture.

3. Early stage marketing of Internet Celebrity

The first influencers in the history of overseas influencer marketing originated with the Queen and the Pope. Long ago, the Queen and the Pope advocated for pharmaceuticals. They were the first influencers in the history of opinion leader (influencer) marketing, promoting the use of medicines to people who did not believe in them at the time and helping them to better solve their ailments[7]. Since then, overseas influencer marketing has started a long road of development. A sketch of the development stage is shown in Fig. 1. In 2004 and 2005, after the establishment of platforms such as Facebook, peaked in 2010 with the rise of many social stars and some people started recording their own content and uploading it to these platforms for distribution. At this stage, weblebrities were only just starting to grow and had not yet developed a particularly mature profit model.

The period from 1998 to 2004 was an era of expression and literary creation. Ascribed to technical limitations, people can only express their talents and abilities through words and are active on various literary websites. This has led to the emergence of content-based literary influencers. Afterwards, with the increase of network bandwidth, the Internet ushered in the image age. Meanwhile, with the increase in the number of netizens, the public's emotions need to be vented, and people begin to vent their reputations on the Internet, forming an "ugly" culture to gain attention in a self-deprecating way. People started to gain attention by spoofing and being ugly. However, on account of the different values conveyed, it has not been recognized by people and has little value. Instead, the seeds of business have sprouted. At the same time, Internet promotion companies with business logic such as packaging, hype, promotion, and realization have also appeared one after another.

Then, with the advent of the e-commerce era and the emergence of Weibo, a marketing model based on platforms, internet celebrities and fans has been constructed. The popularity of short videos in 2016 ushered in the era of Internet content in China, which accelerated the formation of MCN institutions and the commercialization of the Internet celebrity industry. People started interacting with others through live streaming and sharing their daily lives through short videos. Internet celebrity marketing has brought a spring breeze to many fields such as food, clothing, housing, transportation, beauty, fashion, fitness games, etc. Therefore, many areas can be adapted to Internet Celebrity marketing.

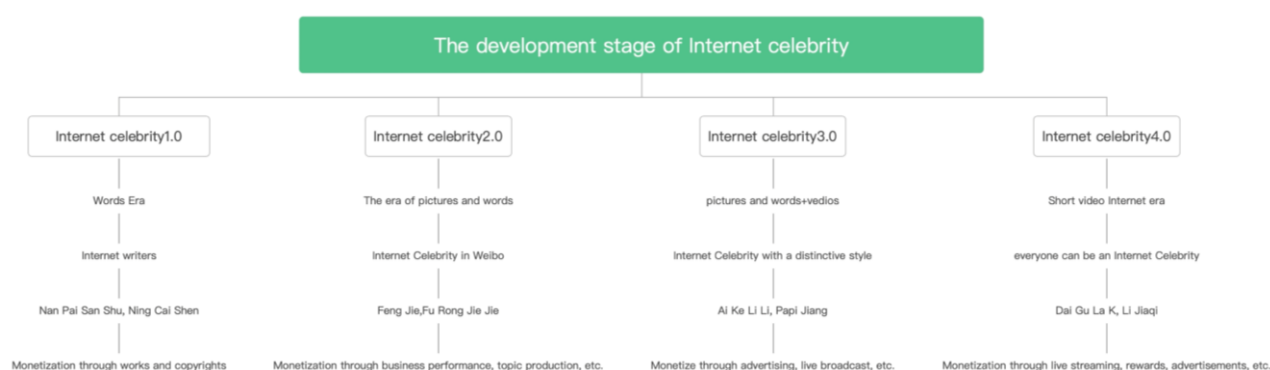


Fig. 1 The development stage of Internet celebrity.

4. Current status

In conclusion, Nowadays, we have entered a stage where everyone can become an online celebrity, and people only need to have a cell phone to become an online celebrity. Young people who are chasing trends can find a sense of belonging in the trendy net celebrities. They also hope to express

some of their wishes and ideas by becoming net celebrities, and this culture has surged into the cultural trend of the whole society. Ai Media Consulting data shows that the number of MCN agencies in China exceeded 14,500 in 2019, up 150% from the previous year, and reached 28,000 in 2020. the total MCN market has exceeded 20 billion yuan, over 33 billion yuan in 2021, and already up to 43.2 billion yuan in 2022 [8]. According to the data chart can be seen with the development of time China's MCN market is expanding growth, short video also from a form of entertainment into a social way. More and more socially fearful young people are also using short videos to find people with the same ideas as themselves to socialize. People's lives are becoming more and more dependent on short videos, and during the period from June 2020 to June 2021, the number of Jitterbug's contributed video plays gradually increases. Douyin users are predicted to have 809 million users in 2022. Xiaohongshu also has 200 million monthly active users. According to Fashion Business Express, Xiaohongshu recently released the top 10 lifestyle trends for 2022 by analyzing data from 2021, 8 of which are related to the fashion industry, such as mountain lifestyle and snow and ice craze. Many brands such as Arc'teryx, Hoka One One, Burton and other outdoor brands have become popular in the mass market. And the national pride of being Chinese is engraved in the bones, people are more and more respecting things with Chinese elements, and for the trend is also, more net celebrities began to promote clothing with Chinese characteristics in the hope that these designs can go to the world. The new Chinese national trend and genderless dressing have become the fashion trend of 2022 in Xiaohongshu, providing a traffic window for a group of relevant brands in vertical fields. The diversified content spread by short videos and social media has also made people no longer inherent to their own aesthetic standards and gradually start to accept newer and more unique styles. It can be seen that the current stage of the expanding and improving Internet Celebrity marketing market has a huge impact on the trend market.

5. The impact of COVID-19

In conclusion, In the wake of the new crown epidemic, there is no doubt that no one has escaped the effects of this epidemic, but it has served as a boost to Internet Celebrity marketing. Being confined to their homes, creators had to produce original and more authentic video content, which allowed for a stronger emotional connection with people. The growth of users brought by the epidemic to short-form video platforms also gives weblebrities more room to grow.

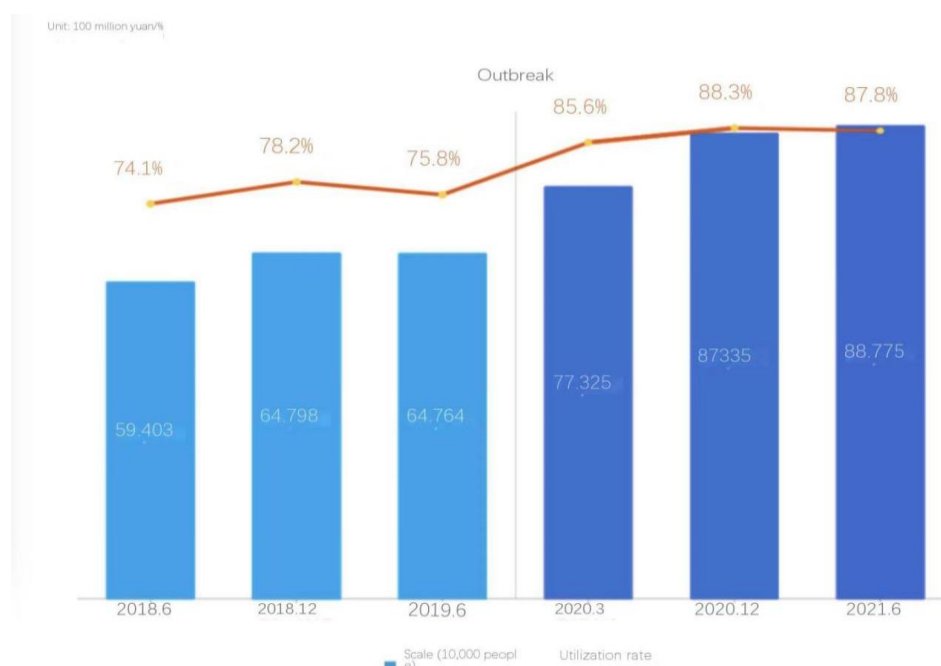


Fig. 2 Size and utilization of short video users.

As illustrated in Fig. 2, the user size of short videos has grown from 74.1% before the epidemic to 87.8% by 2021 which can be considered a lot of percentage. However, the impact on the trend market is divided into several aspects, the first to suffer is of course the offline physical stores, the offline store traffic has basically suffered a devastating blow. On the other hand, it has changed the style of trendy culture and set off the home style fashion. With the development of the epidemic, people's attitude towards life has also changed and they have started to gradually move towards comfort, so there has been a significant increase in sales of affordable fashion brands such as UNIQLO, VENEX and UNDER ARMOUR.

On the other hand, because of the control of the epidemic and the compliance with values, more trendy brands started to do online campaigns, walkabouts, etc. LV and CHANEL, among others, have adopted this approach. Little red book also offered commercialization and live debut to become the intersection of "community and e-commerce". The new crown pneumonia is affecting people's habits and also bringing changes to the way to wear and the points one focuses on when choosing clothing items.

6. Limitation & Prospects

Nevertheless, the results demonstrated in this paper have some shortcomings and drawbacks. As people become more and more addicted to short videos, and the short videos bring a lot of information, human beings start to lose some of their ability to think independently. The number of people determines the direction of an event, and people will more often follow the views of most people without thinking about the correctness of things by themselves.

Secondly, the threshold of the market of Internet celebrity is very low, anyone can enter, which leads to the irregularity of the Internet celebrity market. Some people will use some vulgar words and behaviors to gain eyeballs and traffic, which causes a bad trend in the short video industry. The impact on the trendy market is that more and more people will wear some so-called brand names to show off, which also instills some young people with the wrong concept of trendy culture and creates a comparison mentality.

In the meantime, the development of the Internet also allows some people to catch the heat of trendy clothes, they will capture those clothes are the hottest at the moment, people are more inclined to buy, and then to make fake and sell. It can take away the meaning of the trendy clothing that it was created for. For each artist, designer's work is created little by little and contains the content and opinion of the designer. Therefore, this kind of fake and showy spread will have a great impact on the trendy market and a bad trend.

For further study, the market of Internet celebrity should strengthen the control to resist the spread of bad culture, and strengthen the integration of Internet Celebrity marketing and the trend market simultaneously, so as to improve the public's awareness of the trend culture and establish positive values to better cater to consumer.

7. Summary

In conclusion, this paper investigates marketing of Internet celebrity based on Douyin and Xiaohongshu. To be specific, the Chinese market of Internet celebrity in China has been expanding over time. According to the analysis, marketing of Internet celebrity has a positive impact on trending culture based on Douyin and Xiaohongshu and the whole Chinese short video market. Besides, this has also increased the awareness and interest of more young people in the trend market. Moreover, young people in the Z-era are becoming more diverse and receptive to new styles. Nevertheless, the bad market trend can also cause the input of wrong values. In the future, the spread of these false values and the culture of fakery should be strictly controlled by the platforms. Overall, these results offer a guideline for better dissemination of trendy culture.

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