

Review of the Disney Marketing Strategy Impact and contrast between new and classic characters

Ziyue Zhou*

Shenzhen Foreign Languages School, Shenzhen, 518083, China

*Corresponding author: zhouyueeva@126.com

Abstract. This research aims at how the Disney marketing effect has affected marketing strategies in the Asian market. This paper offers an extensive examination of the various patterns that this strategy serves in the market in order to have a deeper grasp of how the strategy works and what are the impacts on them. The study paper also provides a thorough introduction to the development of both the character and Disney's buildings. Both positive and negative perspectives are included in this investigation. The majority of the controversy is directly related to Disneyland's use of hungry marketing strategies. Additionally, comprehensive statistics data is given, which is used to analyze the character and brand's recent development. The analytical part takes into account both the recent turnover and the entrance of cultural influence.

Keywords: Disney Company; Marketing Strategy; Consumers Preference.

1. Introduction:

The Walt Disney Company, one of the leading brands in cartoon entertainment, excels both as a production company and as a business strategist. Walt and Roy O. Disney began Disney as the Disney brother studio on October 16, 1923. Later, Disney adopted Mickey Mouse as its official mascot, making him a globally recognized cartoon character. All of this occurred during the Walt Disney Company's formative years [1]. In addition to Walt Disney's notable success in the film industry, the company has further broadened its industry to cover a wider spectrum of companies. The first Disney theme park debuted in Anaheim, California, on July 17, 1955. On April 15, 1983, Disney built its first theme park outside of the United States in Urayusa, Japan. The Walt Disney Company has reportedly established a number of processes that all work to support Disney's lofty goals and open new doors for the company's holographic business model [2]. Walt Disney intended for these amusement parks to be built in order to preserve humanity's collective innocence and to create the happiest places on earth. Additionally, the delicate trinkets and ancillary goods give guests a happy feeling when they leave the park. An adorable Mickey Mouse plush toy or a memento in the form of a Disney character is almost always carried by visitors as they depart Disneyland at the end of the day. This hypothetical situation demonstrates how subtly important souvenirs and related revenue from Disney parks are to the company's bottom line.

But since since Disney's first theme park outside of California debuted in Japan. To be more specific, it is a strategy to expand Disney's Asian market [2]. The production business for its souvenirs has become highly wealthy, and this may even open up an entirely new marketing channel for Disney. The birth of the Duffy bear [7] in the year 2003 is the best illustration that can be used to help explain this phenomenon. The Duffy bear is the only Disney character who lacks its own movies or animated series, in contrast to other Disney characters. Just by virtue of its own lovable appearance and the role of its young, this adorable little bear soon rose to fame in Tokyo Disneyland in a matter of weeks. In this case, the circumstance has once more caused a great deal of public anxiety regarding Disney. Additionally, Duffy's creation is just the beginning of Disney's commercial structure being rebuilt. A cute little girl bear named ShellieMay was the second character that Disney's animators produced with Duffy by the year 2012. Even if Duffy's arrival was more than ten years ago, the public's love for these characters has not diminished. However, the development of these animal characters was just the beginning of Disney's marketing plan. Disney has introduced a lot of these non-art, but adored characters over the years. The popularity of new characters like Duffy Bear is replacing that of more traditional ones like Mickey Mouse, according to People, which also discovered that these new

characters without works are rapidly acquiring a significant position in the Disney peripheral and souvenir industry.

This research paper examines the various marketing strategies used by Disney to promote both the traditional characters and the new characters in the Asian market. This research focuses exclusively on the reasons why the new character's peripherals are more well-liked than those of the traditional character, the social controversy that this issue has sparked, and, lastly, the solution that Disney can use to solve the issue.

2. Main body

2.1 Case:

Shanghai Disney Resort distributed a StellaLou Mid-Autumn Festival limited edition plush in mid-summer of August 2021[9]. As soon as this plush toy in the shape of a rabbit was released for sale, it garnered a lot of attention from the public. Many people lined up in the sweltering heat to get this lovely bunny plush because they were so in love with it. What's more astonishing is that the plush was only on the market for two days before it was completely sold out. Disney unveiled a brand-new ip character named LinaBell in September of the same year. Disney was driven to the edge of the wind when this little fox image and character was reintroduced, and its line of ancillaries were also gone after a week on the market. Many Disney fans have stated that this circumstance has contradicted their original purpose of traveling to the park to buy their cherished peripherals after experiencing the second trauma of missing the chance to get these charming accessories. Throughout its history throughout the past century, Disney has consistently been a model of brand development and marketing strategy success. Unquestionably, the fact that a single category of peripheral items provoked significant anxiety in society for Disney must be seen as a double-edged sword that could both introduce the public to this new line of peripherals and spark a heated debate about them. In spite of this scenario, Disney has never experienced a product that couldn't be sold. In actuality, worrying about its peripheral's sale is never necessary.

2.2 Analysis:

2.2.1 Introduction of previous historical image

Reviewing the characters' creation histories is important in order to pose the questions above.

History of the creation of the iconic Disney character Mickey Mouse

Disney's most recognizable character, Mickey Mouse, was created by Walt Disney in 1928[1]. Mickey is an anthropomorphic mouse who has served as The Walt Disney Company's longtime mascot. He normally dons white gloves and a pair of big yellow shoes. Mickey's easygoing and pleasant demeanor draws people in addition to his amusing appearance. Mickey always has a lot of interesting stuff going on when people watch him on television today.

Reviewing Mickey's history reveals that Oswald the rabbit served as the model for the first Mickey Mouse character. However, Universal Studio took seized Oswald's control of the character in 1928. To replace Oswald in this instance, Walter invented a new character known as the Mickey Mouse that resembled Oswald in look. One of the earliest sound cartoons, the short Willy the Steamboat (1928), featured Mickey for the first time in front of an audience. From 1930 onward, a vast range of Mickey-themed comic strips and novels were released. A special bashful falsetto was also created for Mickey by the Disney creative team as one of his distinguishing features in order to give his portrayal of the character more depth. There have been up to five English voice performers since Mickey Mouse was first conceived.

Disney new character's creation history — the series of Duffy and his friends

The history of Duffy Bear, on the other hand, is a lot duller in comparison. Without knowing anything about this bear's history. People only know about this tiny bear since they are aware that Minnie made it for Mickey while he was getting ready to embark on a voyage. In comparison to other

well-known characters, Duffy Bear's path to recognition is significantly easier because he is a brand-new character without any precedent-setting works. In this instance, after Disney's animation creators discovered the benefit of Duffy Bear, they launched a number of unique characters one after another over the course of the following several years, and these characters eventually came to make up the Duffy and his Friends series. The series also features Linabell, the divisive fox character previously described.

2.2.2 Reason why more people are interested in the new-created characters and its peripheral

1. In comparison to the new characters, the traditional characters are regarded as outdated

As was said in the ceremonial passage, Mickey Mouse has been made and popular with the public for close to 100 years. Disney fans may occasionally experience aesthetic fatigue for the same job because Mickey is somehow "over-familiar." In this case, people's expectations for Mickey's peripheral will gradually decrease in favor of growing expectations for the peripheral of new characters [4].

2. The design and planning team for the new character is superior to that of the classical characters

Since the Disney Corporation has complete faith in the traditional roles, it doesn't take much work for the Disney team to retain the zeal and popularity of the traditional roles to keep them in time. The Disney Corporation, in contrast, is worried that interest in the recently launched characters will wane with time. In this scenario, Disney will pay closer attention to the marketing of this kind of product while also stepping up the publicity for this line of products. As an illustration, consider the Duffy and His Friends television series at the Shanghai Disney Resort. Over the past few years, Disney has made Duffy one of its most popular original programming (IP) characters. A dedicated official account for this series has also been formed by Shanghai Disney for the purpose of promoting its products, in addition to the exclusive Duffy month that has been made for the Duffy series.

Culture Influences on the new characters

Duffy was particularly well-liked in Tokyo Disneyland at the time of its establishment. Japanese animation is the world's most robust, after all. The production of the ancillary goods is made in a lot more appealing and upscale manner in this approach. The unusual design of Tokyo Disneyland captured the attention of many customers. Western fans are thrilled to see those characters dressed in Eastern traditional customs since Asian culture is particularly alluring to Western consumers.

2.2.3 Comparison of marketing strategy:

As an illustration, think of Mickey and other well-known cartoon characters like Donald Duck, Goffy, and Winnie the Pooh. On the other side, Disney continues to consistently promote these popular characters conservative, without any extravagant methods of product promotion. The seasonal editions of the iconic figures were only made available ordinarily, with only promoting via images and official press releases. It appears that Disney has great confidence in these well-known characters and that using their history and appeal to promote its ancillary items is the ideal strategy.

In contrast, the plan to advertise the new character's ancillary goods is comparatively more intriguing. Every time Disney is set to introduce a new peripheral, they try to entice more youthful customers. They advertise the products on their website, and the design team also develops a compelling narrative around the seasonal theme. The characters typically dress in seasonal attire and act out a tale related to the topic being discussed. In this case, its distinctive advertising strategy can readily draw in the general audience. The new theme is also used to embellish Disney Land; it serves as a visual marketing tool. Consequently, they may quickly notice the guests in the Disney Park.

In addition, the products are promoted on various social media sites, including as Weibo and Xiaohongshu. These platforms are quite well-liked in China. The character's associated videos or stories will also be published jointly when the peripheral has been released. In this case, some buyers were first drawn to the stories and videos before becoming interested in the ancillary products.

2.2.4 Advantage and disadvantage of Disney's Marketing Strategy

Disney's marketing strategy has been the subject of considerable debate in recent years. It has also caused two opposing viewpoints to form in the neighborhood. As a result, the Disney marketing strategy has both benefits and drawbacks.

Advantage:

(1) The method of marketing the newly released character's products draws attention from the public, reviving interest in this historic brand.

The new characters and its peripheral are getting more and more well-liked among young people as a result of its enticing design and story creation. Furthermore, wearing or carrying an accessory can be seen as a sign of happiness. The visitors may become more involved if this is done. Then, a social media post or article summarizing this rewarding event will be published. Then, it can be shared with the public.

(2) This strategy may also contribute to the emergence of a fresh generation of Disney devotees for both characters.

Many youngsters engage in this new kind of marketing approach. Even yet, at first, the reason someone would purchase a peripheral was just because of how amazing it looked. Additionally, when the new characters gain popularity, it's possible that other Disney characters and their supporting cast will follow suit. The operator of Tokyo Disneyland reported that for the fiscal year that ended in March, profits increased by 16 percent to \$1.2 billion (129.4 billion), while revenues increased by about 10 percent to \$4.7 billion (525.6 billion) [7].

(3) The wounded and Shanghai Disney have seen part of their profits rise as a result of this marketing campaign. Still using Linabell as an example, Shanghai Daily reports that although Disney did not disclose prices for the LinaBell plushies during its online reservation exercise, the products in the theme park's permanent collection normally cost between 100 and 300 Chinese yuan (\$16 to \$47) each.

Disadvantages:

Criticism on Starvation Marketing Strategy and Negative Social Influence

As mentioned above, numerous Disney fans, as was already noted, are unable to buy the accessory they choose for their favorite character Linabell because of the ongoing product scarcity crisis. The Shanghai Disney Resort, however, did not react to the problem in a proactive and assertive way. Rather, with the introduction of limited-edition items from the Duffy and his friend's collection, it wished to gradually lessen people's desire for certain of the products. What's more, some individuals, even made light of Linabell's transformation into a commodity that can be traded for cash. More people began to wonder if Shanghai Disney was using "starvation marketing" on purpose. Disney is no longer a joyful destination for travelers as a result of this issue. Instead, many consumers are worried while making purchases for a souvenir because of the "starvation marketing" strategy. They are concerned that there may be another lack of Disney accessories. In this circumstance, Disney's popularity has also declined. This will ultimately cause people to distrust Disney. Additionally, Disney's marketing strategy of this nature have led to social criticism of the company. The origin of the sudden expansion is extremely perplexing since, unlike Linabell, who used a virtual persona to make a doll without even having comparable cartoons, Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck were extremely popular due to the popularity of their cartoons. The real cause of the sudden growth is far more difficult [10].

Moreover, one significant point on the starvation marketing is that the popularity of Duffy and his friends breeding the emergence of commodity scalpers. These scalpers uses some special channels and familiarity with the services of the park, selling a limited number of goods at a higher price, earning a small price difference. The prices of individual limited products are speculated to be one to two times of the original price.

2.2.5 The turnover of Disney souvenir merchandise under the controversy---A significant influence on Shanghai Disneyland's Revenue

Under such an intense controversy, one thing that cannot be denied is that Shanghai Disney's turnover in fiscal year 2021 surprisingly reached a staggering number of 8 billion RMB. This magnificent impact also influences the entire revenue of the Shanghai tourism industry and the employment situation in Shanghai. According to a report by the China Tourism Research Institute, from June 2016 to June 2019, Shanghai Disneyland's fixed asset investment took 0.13 percent of the city's GDP on average annually, and the park's consumption took 0.21 percent, with park visitors spending an average of between RMB 1,000 and RMB 2,000 on each visit. Shanghai Disneyland released the following statistics in honor of its fifth anniversary in 2021: the park saw more than 83 million visitors in total over the course of five years, generating more than 40 billion yuan in tourism revenue, over 2.6 billion yuan in tax revenue, and providing direct jobs for more than 6,000 people [6]. The profit of the souvenir goods occupies one-third of the total turnover, and this is enough to prove that souvenir merchandise has a position that cannot be underestimated in the whole Disney park's operation.

Another report shows that when it comes to positioning within the derivatives chain, Disney has been in front of other amusement parks throughout the globe. The Walt Disney Company released financial statistics despite the pandemic closure, indicating \$7.234 billion in sales from Disney Parks, Experiences, and Derivatives for the three months ending January 1, 2022, up 101.62% year-over-year [10].

2.3 Current approach to respond--Approach that has been applied mainly in China

According to Shanghai Disney's official resort's official account, released the summer limited edition on-line. Consumers can only purchase them through timed snaps. Though this method has also been criticized because the limited number of products is still really hard for them to buy, it is lucky to see from this method that the chance for the consumers to buy one is getting larger. Moreover, the selling period has been expanded to 2 weeks.

3. Conclusion

Despite the controversies surrounding its marketing strategy in Shanghai, Disney is unquestionably the largest company in the world as a century-old corporation. It has also assisted Disney in gaining a new generation of followers by improving public opinion of the business. In conclusion, by contrasting Disney's marketing approaches for distinct IP characters, this study reveals a variety of marketing approaches that are advantageous to numerous businesses [11]. Disney is still successful in promoting its products, whether or not this marketing method is suitable.

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