

# Research on the New Direction of Community Marketing - Taking the Rise of Male Power of Little Red Book as an Example

Yunxuan Jiang<sup>1, †, +</sup>, Yuelin Liu<sup>2, \*, †, +</sup>, Jie Luo<sup>3, †, +</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hangzhou New Channel School, Hangzhou, China

<sup>2</sup>Information Management and Information System, School of Management, Beijing Normal University at Zhuhai, Zhuhai, China

<sup>3</sup>International Economics and Trade, Faculty of Business Economics, Shanghai Business School, Shanghai, China

\*Correspondence author: 1902020081@mail.bnuz.edu.cn

†These authors contributed equally

**Abstract.** The combination of UGC community marketing and B2C e-commerce cross-border mode is a leading e-commerce marketing mode that conforms to the new trade mode of the state. The core lies in taking consumers as the center and driving the transformation of online shopping mall products to make profits through the platform of community content sharing. Among them, Little Red Book has high learning value. By collecting specific data such as the number of Little Red Book users, and making statistical mapping analysis, it is found that the proportion of male users increased from 10% to 12.1% and then to 31.62% from 2013 to 2019 to 2021. With the development of the "Z-Trend Era", male content-oriented notes are increasing on the social platform of Little Red Book, and the increase of Little Red Book's male users has changed the prejudice of its original "female community" and made the community content more diversified. At the same time, it also brought a lot of new vitality to the platform, which is full of homogeneous content, and subtly improved the user viscosity, loyalty and the online shopping mall's utilization rate.

**Keywords:** Little Red Book; UGC; rise of male users; Z-Trend Era; He-economy.

## 1. Introduction

With the continuous development of Internet technology and the steady growth of per capita disposable income, the scale of users in China's social e-commerce industry keeps increasing in recent years. The outbreak of the 2020 COVID-19 epidemic made online consumption gradually replace offline consumption as the mainstream trend.

Trade in internet plus is developing rapidly. The combination of User Generated Content (UGC) community marketing represented by Little Red Book and cross-border e-commerce has developed quickly. In 2020, trust in Little Red Book products reached 70.66%. Little Red Book started with the development of "sharing good things" in 2013 and gathered a large number of users on the basis of a community communication platform. Then it went shopping and planting grass through the UGC platform and the new model of sharing community comes into being. Little Red Book seized the "instant satisfaction" of users' acquisition of information and data collection content, once again introduced products into users' vision, took the content as the guide, attracted the ultimate target users, provided links and platforms for transactions, accumulated a large amount of shopping characteristic information data, and constantly achieved it with the help of users' word-of-mouth and shopping experience [1, 2]. Its slogan "Mark My Life" is all over the major social platforms, which is constantly attracting more people to join in." E-commerce Law" severely cracked down on the purchasing industry. But the buying and selling chain established by Little Red Book has no influence, and its market share has gradually increased.

With the development of the Z-trend era, the "He-economy" is constantly rising, and Little Red Book takes advantage of the trend to vigorously develop male incentive programs. In 2019, the number of male users of Little Red Book increased rapidly, and the number of male active users

increased by 1550% year-on-year. Based on the overall active user growth rate of 540%, in August 2021, the proportion of male registered users of Little Red Book reached 30%, and the proportion of male users exceeded 30%. It is undoubtedly that this is a huge turning point for Little Red Book. With this turning point, Little Red Book is expected to get rid of the label of "female community" and develop in a balanced way.

This paper will make a statistical analysis of the specific users of Little Red Book and analyze the changes in it, discuss the benefits brought by the increase of male users of Little Red Book in combination with its competitive strategy, and finally provide targeted suggestions for its future development. This paper hopes to solve the problems of user enrichment and generalization faced by Little Red Book after its development to a certain extent, and at the same time, make up for the development vacancy of the e-commerce model combining UGC community with B2C cross-border trade in the face of the current "Z-Trend Era" and the rising "He-economy", and finally point out the direction for its development.

## **2. The Introduction of Little Red Book**

Little Red Book was founded in 2013, which is a shopping-sharing community through deep UGC. 2014 saw the launch of an online mall, and in 2018 the Little Red Book App exceeded 100 million users, with its annual addition of 500,000 users, and has grown into the world's largest consumer word-of-mouth repository and community e-commerce platform [3]. Its UGC community attributes are used to enhance user stickiness and activity, leverage its advantages in the social field, and analyze demand from user browsing data to promote accurate marketing. The B2C cross-border e-commerce attribute is the guarantee of quality traffic and authentic products, and Little Red Book has found the commercialization channel to realize the low-price demand of overseas purchases by establishing bonded warehouse to meet users' demand.

## **3. Competitive Strategy**

### **3.1 Personalized Recommendation Strategy**

In the Little Red Book community, a large amount of data information is generated through users' browsing, searching, liking and collecting, and then accurate matching is performed to capture users' preferences and needs. At the same time, the software will record every time the user browses the community video and purchases products, forming a huge user database, which can be constantly revised in the recommended content to achieve a personalized recommendation marketing strategy.

### **3.2 Community Strategy**

The community experience of "high interaction + high authenticity + high praise" adopted by Little Red Book has become a competitive barrier that cannot be copied by other platforms and has established a natural seeding scene for brands. At the same time, the existence of a community makes its user stickiness much higher than that of a simple shopping platform, so the mature community operation is the core competitiveness of the Little Red Book platform [4].

### **3.3 Word-of-mouth Marketing**

Behind any propaganda is the real experience of users, and the purchase notes of users enrich the information about products, with pictures and usage descriptions to make people believe in the authenticity of product information. The Little Red Book community has a large number of real user experiences to shape good word of mouth and use the community as a huge user word-of-mouth database with real-time updates [5].

### 3.4 Price Marketing

Self-operated bonded warehouses ensure the quality of goods, while reducing the cost of transportation and thus controlling the price of goods. Little Red Book adopts different charging strategies for different user groups, charging membership service fees for ordinary users, access fees, mall transaction fees, advertising fees and search ranking fees for brand merchants, as well as column knowledge fees and fries promotion fees for bloggers and enterprise numbers.

## 4. Data Analysis

### 4.1 Data Analysis of Little Red Book Users

#### 4.1.1 User gender

In 2012, when Little Red Book was first established, most people thought the proportion of male users was around 10%, see Fig.1.

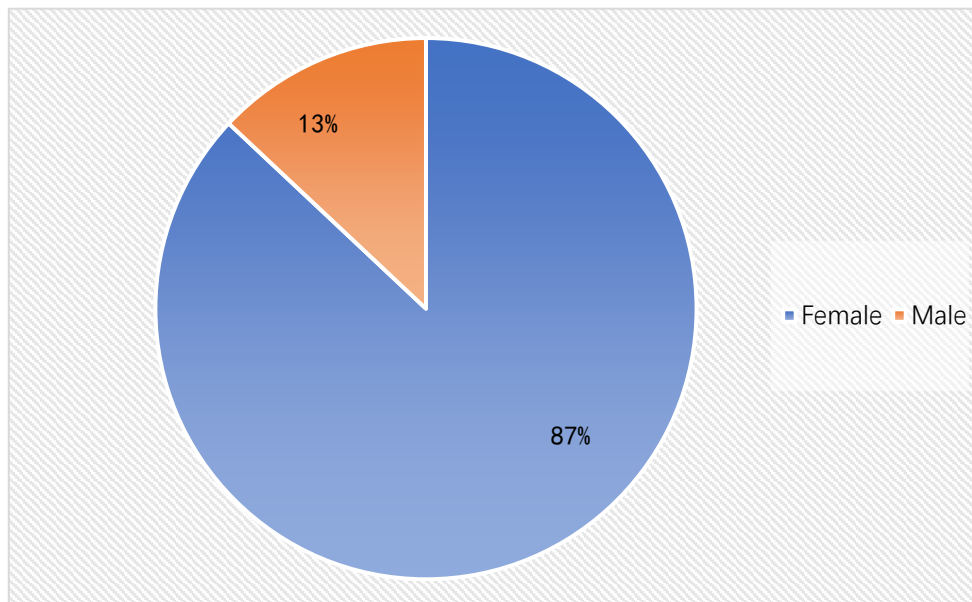


Figure 1. Gender share of people using Little Red Book in 2019 [6]

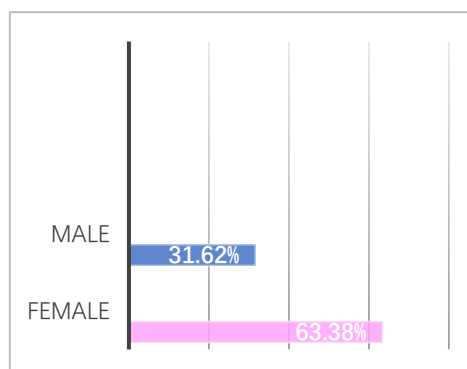
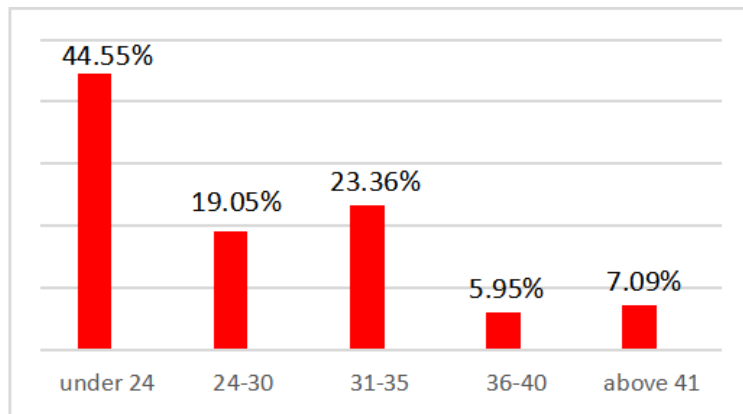


Figure 2. Sex ratio of users of Little Red Book in 2021 [7]

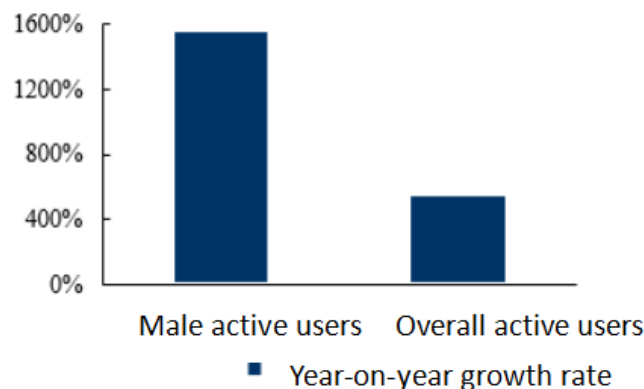


**Figure 3.** The age proportion of Little Red Book users in 2021 [7]

However, according to 2019 data, the male share of Little Red Book is about 13%, while it rises to 31.62% in 2021. In Fig. 2 and 3, while the overall user volume is growing, the huge increase in the proportion of male users has loosened the label of Little Red Book - the definition of "female community" is more like an inherent impression of the company itself, which is no longer accurate and has become its past. The rise of male users is in line with the trend of the times [8].

It seems that this is a vertical community content gradually generalized, the field, the number gradually increased after the proliferation effect. In another dimension, this is also the development of the Little Red Book so far, in the user operation of the initiative or passive necessarily to take a step.

#### 4.1.2 User break circle growth



**Figure 4.** Growth rate of active users in Little Red Book 2019 [9]

In Fig. 4, the number of male active users of Little Red Book grew at a year-on-year rate of 1550% in 2019. On the basis of the overall active user growth rate of 540%.

However, along with the surge in the proportion and activity of male users, gender dichotomy has not occurred. Compared with other content communities, Little Red Book has a high degree of user inclusion. Users are keen to export their views rather than pursue the strong offensive community attributes of the content itself, or the phenomenon of constant controversy and momentary tearing to attract traffic is not evident in it. The bloggers ride on friendly interaction or are each wonderful. What people see in Little Red Book is mutual respect and appreciation of others' differentiated forms of life.

## 4.2 The Number of Articles Posted in Little Red Book Notes



**Figure 5.** Number of posts in the single account of Little Red Book [10]

Fig. 5 is a comparison chart of the average monthly number of articles posted by male authors and the average monthly total number of articles in the first half of 2021 for the Little Red Book single account, which shows that the number of articles posted by male authors has been higher than the average level of the platform, and male content productivity is increasing.

## 5. The Reason for the Increase of Male Users in Little Red Book

### 5.1 The Arrival of the "Z-Trend Era"

"Z-Trend Era" is a new generation of people who are influenced by digital information technology and have a diversified consumer philosophy that values consumer experience, quality of goods, refusal to overspend, and consumer taste. In the huge consumer market, there is also room for them to choose, so they want to form their own unique consumer style. The arrival of the trendy era has also raised the attention of a large number of male users to various content-sharing apps.

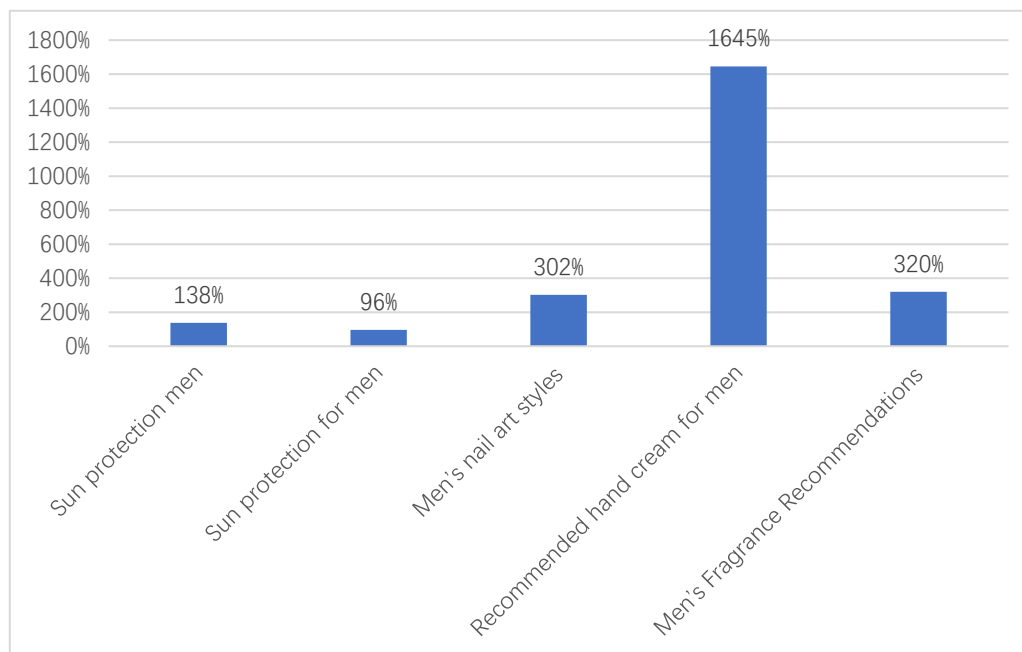
### 5.2 The Rise of the "He-economy"

The "He-economy" refers to the male economy. Along with the increasing awareness of men to improve their own face, the consumption boundary of male groups has expanded. Compared with female consumers, male consumers have higher loyalty to brands. The rise of his economy cannot be separated from the current environment, and the number of single men far exceeds that of single women, which allows men to release their personal spending power and have the time and money at their disposal to enjoy the self-satisfaction brought by consumption.

## 6. Little Red Book Male User Incentive Initiatives

### 6.1 Start with Traffic Hotspots Beauty Care Industry and Add Male Title Notes

As a leader in "aesthetics", more men are seeking "beauty" solutions in Little Red Book, and the men's beauty care industry is rapidly growing in popularity. As of June 2022, Little Red Book's data showed that the search index for men's skincare rose 167% in the past two months. Meanwhile, between July 19 in 2021 and September 25 in 2022, the number of notes for the keyword "male" on Little Red Book increased by 11.54 million, exceeding the total number of notes in the past 8 years [11].



**Figure 6.** Little Red Book Men's Beauty Care keyword search volume increased half a year from the previous month (July 2021-June 2022) [12]

Compared with direct beauty care needs, the unique sense of atmosphere in the Little Red Book community is leading the frontier of men's beauty care with its powerful infectious power. Fig. 6 shows that the search volume of "men's nail style" and "men's perfume eau de parfum recommendation" has increased by more than 300% in half a year [13].

## 6.2 Little Red Book MCN Male Content Incentive Program

In the first half of 2021, Little Red Book launched the MCN male content incentive program, with the introduction of digital, trendy, automotive and other male content authors, 2.9 billion traffic support, and an increase in the number of notes from men's wear and skincare to games, attracting a large number of male brands to the community and further meeting the content needs of male users [14].

According to the official data of Little Red Book, in the past year, Little Red Book's technology digital content grew 500% year-on-year, sports events grew 1140%, sports and fitness grew 300%, and the number of community food notes posted grew 230% [11].

With the opportunity of the increase of male bloggers, Little Red Book can introduce many male commodity brands, increasing the haste and utilization rate of shopping malls. Male bloggers' grass-planting notes, as well as Little Red Books' own online shopping malls, are convenient for users to purchase directly after reading the notes, which greatly improves the utilization rate and promotion degree of the shopping malls.

## 6.3 Cooperation with the Event Channel, the Introduction of Stars and Sports Stars

On July 12, 2021, Little Red Book announced that it had become a special strategic partner of the top tournament of China Central Radio and Television, as well as an official partner of the Chinese national women's soccer team. Little Red Book also invited major popular stars, game bloggers, rap labels and others to reside through its home page exposure resources, greatly increasing the number of male user groups.

Little Red Book is not concerned with content creation, but with atmosphere creation. When male celebrities share their real lives on Little Red Book, they play a leading role and encourage other male users by osmosis.

## 7. The benefits of Increased Male Users of Little Red Book

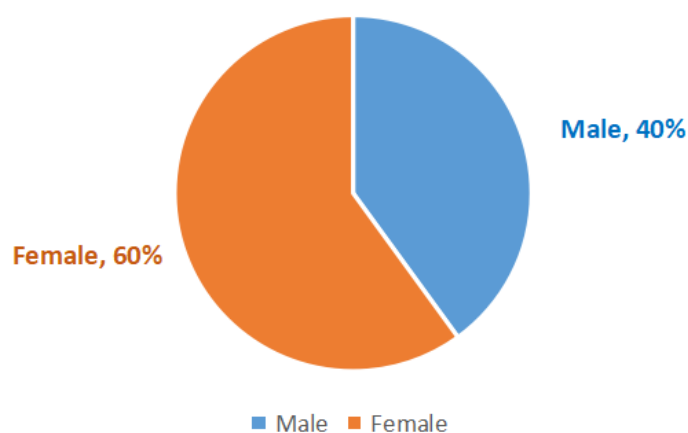
### 7.1 Change the Bias of the Original "Women's Community" and Diversify the Content of the Community

The original customer base of Little Red Book is mostly female, and the content of the notes is biased towards beauty and emotion, forming a "female community" bias, which creates resistance to the natural inflow of male users. For Little Red Book, if it wants to develop more comprehensively, it needs male users and male-oriented content to be seen by more ordinary users. The strategy of joining the Olympic Games to make sports content visible has increased the attention of male users to a certain extent.

With the rise of "his economy", the community culture, which has been occupied by "her economy" for a long time, has changed. With the increase of male content, the whole community content is more diversified, and besides female-oriented content, Little Red Book can also become an encyclopedia for male users.

### 7.2 "His economy" Promotes "Her Choice", Increasing User Viscosity and Mall Purchase Rate

The proportion of female users searching for men's beauty care in the site is 60% (see Fig.7), which shows that "she chooses" occupies a considerable voice in men's beauty care.



**Figure 7.** Gender distribution of users searching for men's beauty care-related content on the website (as of June 2022) [12]

Little Red Book in-station search volume half-yearly chain data (July 2021-June 2021) shows that "send boyfriend skin care products" increased by 160%, and "boyfriend immersion skin care" increased by 96%. Women pay more attention to rituals and male brands should pay attention to female perspective scenario seeding such as girlfriend, through "her choice" to guide his consumption.

While stimulating male consumption, this is also a new opportunity for female brands. The addition of male elements to a community filled with homogenized content can undoubtedly have a catfish effect and revitalize a condensed pool of traffic. This does not mean that women's power in Little Red Book is declining. On the contrary, the women's power precipitated in the genes of the Little Red Book community will become more extreme because of the addition of male elements.

## 8. Conclusion

In the past two years, Little Red Book has made a great effort to encourage the number of male users and vigorously developed the "He-economy", which is undoubtedly successful and correct. With the increase of male users, the community content is more diverse. Furthermore, it provides more new directions for note content.

Virtually, the change in Little Red Book has nothing to do with gender, but is the problem of user generalization that the content community must face when it develops to a certain extent. Little Red Book is not only a platform for sharing good things, but also a platform for users to communicate and share life fragments. What they want to express is that tens of millions of creators and users who live for more than 100 million months present their own lifestyles on the platform. Faced with the continuous increase of male users, Little Red Book should do the following things.

Little Red Book could analyze users' needs from users' browsing data and promotes accurate marketing. After purchasing power is formed, online shopping malls conduct overseas purchasing and online sales on the platform of cross-border community e-commerce through self-built bonded warehouses and relationships with domestic and foreign brands. Different charging strategies and different price positioning are adopted for different user groups, which can greatly meet the needs of users of different classes and ages.

With the opportunity of increasing male users, Little Red Book could cooperate with more official events, invite more stars and brand V to join, and increase the viscosity of male and female users. At present, the strategy of cooperation between Little Red Book and the Chinese women's football team makes the distribution of social notes more balanced. It is suggested that the future should not be limited to sports, and other industries such as games and rap can be developed.

With the opportunity of increasing male topics, it can appropriately use male perspectives to talk about female topics and provide more development directions for "main force" female users. Although there is a great growth trend of male users at present, the main users of Little Red Book are still women. In many communities filled with homogeneous content, the increase of male topics will play a catfish effect, which will diversify the originally solidified communities.

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