

Exploring Digital Marketing Strategies in Catering Industry

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Abstract. With the development and popularity of the Internet, digital marketing has gradually become popular in various industries. Following the development of the times, the catering industry applies digital marketing as the main marketing method. Starbucks, as one of the major companies in the restaurant industry, has complete digital marketing strategies that can be utilized as the research case in this paper. By exploring the advantages and disadvantages of Starbucks' digital marketing strategy in China, combining qualitative research and quantitative research, this paper provided ideas for other brands in the catering industry to improve their digital marketing models. This paper first introduced the digital marketing strategy of the catering industry and Starbucks and the recent research related to those. Then, the paper was followed by a detailed introduction of the research tools, methods, and model. Using SPSS 25 to build a structural equation model (SEM), the path coefficients showed the relationship of variables. This paper concluded that Starbucks uses its digital marketing strategy to attract customers. This strategy heavily influenced people's purchase intentions; however, customers' willingness to share Starbucks products on social media was not strong enough to fulfill Starbucks' expectation of attracting potential customers through existing customers' promotions on social media. This paper figured out how to solve Starbucks's problem and how other brands in the catering industry would learn to correct it.

Keywords: Catering industry; China; Digital marketing; Social media; Starbucks.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

In recent years, most enterprises have gained benefits from digital marketing. Digital marketing, which emerged in the 1990s, is a kind of marketing based on the Internet and social-relations network to connect enterprises, users, and the public. This marketing strategy applies digital ways to convey valuable information and services to users and the public. Also, it carries out planning, implementation, and operation management to implement customer value and corporate marketing goals. Digital marketing has many different ways to reach users, including through social media, email, websites, and blogs [1]. This strategy not only promotes the corporate brand but also increases customer stickiness, which is a convenient and quick way to attract potential customers. China's digital marketing has been in rapid development for more than two decades and is currently in a golden age. Due to environmental factors such as the normalization of the epidemic, the continuous migration of public behavior to online scenes has catalyzed new opportunities, and brands are generally bullish on digital marketing. According to the official report of i-Research, China's digital market is currently growing at a rapid rate of more than 20% per year. Its market size is expected to exceed 1.2 trillion yuan in 2022 [2]. Therefore, digital marketing is regarded as an important marketing strategy in various fields. For example, Haidilao, a domestic service-ace catering enterprise, employs an APP and WeChat platform to create a new catering selling point, which not only improves the efficiency of enterprise management and saves labor costs but also brings customers a fast and novel consumer experience. Uber, a foreign ride-hailing company, has a set of excellent digital

marketing strategies that are globally recognized, and its company has gained great benefits through this strategy [1]. Nike also utilizes digital marketing to expand its brand awareness [1].

As a giant in the coffee industry, Starbucks has an impressive position in the catering industry. In 2018, Starbucks was named the fifth globally respected company by Fortune magazine and also ranked first in the food and beverage industry. Moreover, 2018 is the 16th consecutive year that Starbucks — the only traditional brick-and-mortar retail company included in the top 10 has appeared on the global list [3]. According to the selection indicators, Starbucks has a competitive advantage in innovation, personnel management, products, and service quality. Until February 2020, its strategy has helped open nearly 30,000 stores in more than 70 countries around the world [4].

In the annual financial report ending September 2019, Starbucks leveraged about \$246 million of the global budget, much of which was spent by using social media marketing to promote products to consumers. The main platforms include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube [5]. By using product features to create new topics, and enticing customers to post photos of their products and experiences, Starbucks lets buyers turn into brand ambassadors, then it shares those content on its official sites, thus attracting more customers to be their members [5]. User-created contents are 2.4 times more likely to be perceived as authentic by people than those created directly by brands [5]. Consequently, Starbucks builds further trust between the company and potential consumers to encourage higher sales. At the same time, customers can customize their drinks on the WeChat Mini Program or APP. Furthermore, Starbucks regularly launches news events on its official website, which primarily contains joint activities with other brands, charity activities, publicity, sustainability goals, coffee making, and type introduction. customers will know more about this brand through vivid and clear views. In conclusion, it is the use of unique marketing methods to promote it to become a representative brand.

1.2 Research Gap

The Internet has transformed P.C. to mobile, and content has gradually shifted from graphics to video. The form of Internet media has experienced tremendous changes, and basically, all kinds of marketing have become digital marketing. As one of the big brands in the coffee industry, Starbucks has been the subject of research by scholars. To investigate how Starbucks orchestrates its digital marketing strategies to make profits, many scholars have put lots of effort into exploring its strategies. For instance, Xiang Jingjing proposed that cooperation with other platforms is one of Starbucks' effective strategies [6]. Jun and An found that Starbucks also benefited from the APP [7]. Karman et al. studied Starbucks' reputation marketing on social media [8-11]. With the development of the times, the competition in the catering industry has become more intense, the marketing concept has been continuously updated and the marketing efforts have been increasing. At the same time, the Internet ecological environment has also changed the role and division of marketers.

In the context of a complex media environment and diversified consumption, it is becoming increasingly difficult for brands to make digital marketing that can deeply impress consumers, and the biggest pain lies in the separation between creativity, insight, technology, and media. How to form an organism that integrates the origin of creativity and the interface of technology is a problem that the entire industry has been constantly exploring. Therefore, Starbucks' digital marketing strategy has been further optimized and innovated, which has a certain reference value for other catering enterprises, and its innovative points and improvement methods are worth exploring.

1.3 Fill The Gap

This research focus on Starbucks to explore the digital marketing strategy of the catering industry. Through 'the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to study its strategy, questionnaires to collect data, and SPSS 25 software to analyze data, this research explores the advantages and disadvantages of Starbucks' digital marketing strategy and provide new ideas for the development of the catering industry. The rest of this article is structured as follows: The next section is a literature review that focuses on two key themes: digital marketing and social media. Section three introduces

methods. The fourth section applies figures and models to analyze and organize the data. The last section discusses and summarizes cases, it also makes suggestions and prospects.

2. Literature Reivew

2.1 Social Media Marketing in Catering Industry

Due to the advances in technology and the incorporation of digital platforms into people's daily lives, social media marketing, a digital marketing channel in recent years, has gradually become the preferred marketing model for companies. Under this circumstance, the relationship between companies, customers and social media has become more complex, which is they are mutually influenced under this business model. Companies can expand their customer base and increase customer stickiness with the help of social media. The increasing customer number and loyalty can benefit companies doing their marketing campaigns in the future [12].

Without exception, the catering industry chooses digital marketing to get more revenue. Many scholars have explored social media marketing in the catering industry to investigate how to gain profits under this marketing pattern. Under social media marketing, the customer experiences and purchase intention should be first placed. Hsiao et al. employ the ISS model to detect that the customers continued use intention of Starbucks APP in Taiwan is based on the quality factor, privacy and security, utilitarian value, and degree of satisfaction [13]. This result paves the way for further development of social media marketing strategies in the catering industry. The more people are willing to use the APP to purchase, the more the social media marketing strategy will be efficient. Moreover, Lai analyses the development status of the catering app and points out that a specific brand's customer loyalty will increase if most of its customers are willing to use its app [14]. Her results benefit other companies in the catering industry to develop strategies to enhance customers' stickiness by using the brand app [14].

In addition to specific apps, the rise of the WeChat Mini Program has attracted many Chinese scholars' attention. Since WeChat has become the most popular social media in China in recent years, WeChat Mini Program is convenient for people during their purchases. Scholars wonder to explore the role of the WeChat Mini Program under today's digital marketing pattern. Liu and others compared the advantages and disadvantages of merchants' self-built Mini Programs with third-party platforms [15]. Their study points out that third-party platforms played a crucial role in business promotion, but as the number of business entities increased, the competition became more intense [15]. Some merchants choose to build their own Mini Programs for marketing, but there are also shortcomings, such as small data traffic and a weak foundation [15]. The authors put forward the game theory to point out the development trend of the explicit and implicit combination of merchants' self-built Mini Programs and third-party platforms in the coming period [15]. Wang and others analyzed the marketing strategy of catering giant KFC online from the perspective of Mini Program offers [16]. It is proposed that KFC improve user loyalty from four aspects: online ordering, delivery services, mini social programs and membership rights [16]. It has formed a closed-loop service from ordering service to customer relationship management [16]. Accordingly, companies in the catering industry depend on social media marketing a lot, and the current researches give companies some new ways to renew their digital marketing strategies.

2.2 Social Media Marketing Strategy of Starbucks

As one of the big brands in the coffee industry, Starbucks has been the subject of research for scholars for a long time. To find how Starbucks crafted its digital marketing strategy to gain profit, many scholars put lots of effort into analyzing its different marketing strategies. First, cooperating with other platforms to accomplish mutual benefit is one of the useful strategies for Starbucks. Xiang proposed in her dissertation that as early as 2014, Starbucks, as the first brand started to cooperate with WeChat, opened up a new marketing approach at that time [6]. This cooperation has created many classic cases, such as the "Natural Awakening" music series, "Good Morning Alarm Clock",

etc., for the digital marketing field [6]. Except on other platforms, Starbucks also gain profit in their app. Jun and An found that Starbucks also apply their APP to increase sales and customer stickiness [7]. The method they use is to guide customers to bundle the membership on the app and accomplish a win-win result by establishing a partnership with the payment platform and the takeaway platform. Also, they found that Starbucks always attracts customers with membership to spend money by promoting some membership activities [7]. They will send them notifications on the app to gain their attention [7]. Members who receive these notifications always feel they are getting some benefits, which drives their purchase [7].

Besides the cooperation method, Starbucks also focuses on its reputational marketing on social media. Karman found that social media marketing will increase the purchase intention of Starbucks in Indonesia, and he mentioned that online communities, interaction, and sharing of content benefit the purchase intention most [8]. People always believe in other customers' evaluations before they buy products from an unfamiliar brand, so they always want to buy the product from a brand that has a good reputation. Also, interacting with customers is another marketing strategy for Starbucks to attract attention. Viriya has studied the effectiveness of Starbucks' marketing communications on Twitter [9]. By analyzing 565 Starbucks-related tweets and 1392 comments, Viriya found that Starbucks' marketing communications strategy has three original and re-type tweeted content: information-sharing, emotion-evoking, and action-inducing content [9]. This research shows that interacting with customers online is a good strategy for brands to implement efficient social media marketing [9]. This strategy is simple but rewarding, for the brand learns from interaction with customers and gains a good impression from people online [9]. Not only that, Chua and others figure out that Starbucks has redefined the role of customers, transforming them into marketing communicators on social media. Besides, Starbucks has promoted customer engagement on social media through effective marketing strategies [10]. This strategy leverages customer-to-customer communication for marketing in a more acceptable way. Gallagher and Ransbotham even built the 3M framework, the Megaphone, Magnet, and Monitor, to explore Starbucks' social media marketing strategy [11]. The Megaphone represents firm-to-customer communication, the Magnet represents customer-to-firm communication, and the Monitor represents customer-to-customer interaction [11]. They conclude that by combining these three ways of communication, Starbucks is using social media effectively, and this strategy will also benefit other companies a lot [11].

2.3 Summary

According to the materials above, Starbucks has created many digital marketing ways in different channels to realize efficient marketing. Their strategies can roughly be divided into two parts: the first is to cooperate or exploit an external platform to gain profit or implement the digital marketing plan, and the second is to exploit its app to accomplish digital marketing strategies. Whatever one is applied, they focus most on its brand communication and reputation. In addition to using strategies to gain profit from customers, Starbucks knows how to change customers to communicators to accomplish efficient marketing.

However, after analyzing those materials, there still have many limitations. Those materials don't mention whether different age groups have different purchase intentions that affect Starbucks' digital marketing strategy to implement its goal. Also, no materials mention the impact of competing products on Starbucks and how to design efficient marketing strategies to compete with peer competitors.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This research used questionnaires and SPSS data analysis methods to collect data. In order to further understand the impact of Starbucks' digital marketing on customer purchase intentions and purchase strength compared with traditional marketing, it is necessary to design a questionnaire that

meets the background of the era and reflects the voices of Chinese customers. SPSS analysis software is relatively functional, so it is used to design a more reasonable theoretical framework for the study of whether Starbucks' digital marketing strategies can promote customer engagement on social media.

3.2 Data Collection

Prior to undertaking the investigation, this research includes a certain number of pre-questionnaires for analysis, thus ensuring the reliability and validity of the final questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed from the following five aspects:

- (1) Eyebrow: questionnaire name, number;
- (2) Introduction: theme, purpose, confidentiality commitment, etc. It can help the investigator understand the significance of the questionnaire and ensure its authenticity;
- (3) Control variable: demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as gender, age, occupation, etc.
- (4) Main body: three variables involved in the study: marketing model, customer willingness, and purchasing behavior; using the Rickett grade scale; 15 measurement questions;
- (5) Conclusion: Say thanks and best wishes to the investigators.

From July 29, 2022, to August 3, 2022, the Questionnaire Star Mini Program was used to create a questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed online to social platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, Q.Q., Instagram, etc. Of the received 270 questionnaires, 173 were valid. The rate of questionnaire effectiveness is 64.1%. Of the valid questionnaires, men accounted for 59 (34.1%), and women accounted for 114 (65.9%). It can be seen that the proportion of women is slightly higher than that of men. The group aged 21 to 30 in the sample accounted for the highest proportion of 38.73%, followed by the group aged 40 and above, accounting for 31.21%.

3.3 Data Analysis

This research used SPSS25 statistical software to process the collected data, including frequency analysis of demographic variables, reliability testing, difference testing (independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA), scale dimension scoring, and finally tested proposed research hypotheses by structural equation modeling (ESM) modeling. Some questions in the questionnaire are selected to set four dimensions: social media marketing triggers the desire to buy, customers choose online methods to order, traditional marketing attractiveness, and customers share products on social media. Each dimension is measured using the Rickett scale, that is, the five answers of "very agree", "agree", "not necessarily", "disagree", and "strongly disagree" are recorded as 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively, which are applied for the analysis and scoring of the four previous methods.

Combining the background of digital marketing and the characteristics of the situation of marketing in the catering industry, this paper sets five dimensions suitable for establishing a structural equation model referred to the consumer planning behavior theory proposed by Ajzen in 1991: Purchase intension, Traditional marketing, Purchase, Online selling and Share products on social media [17]. Then it makes the following assumptions based on the relationship between the corresponding problem pairs of each dimension:

Hypothesis 1: Starbucks' digital marketing will boost customer purchase intentions;

Hypothesis 1a: Starbucks app and Mini Program marketing will generate customer purchase willingness;

Hypothesis 1b: Starbucks products shared by users on social media will boost customer purchase intentions;

Hypothesis 2: Customers who buy Starbucks have significant intentions to share it on social media;

Hypothesis 3: Traditional Starbucks marketing will boost customer purchase intentions;

The above assumptions are tested one by one in the subsequent analysis of the results. Based on the literature review and research assumptions, the following basic models in Figure 1 are proposed. Some scholars have also proposed similar structural equation models [18,19].

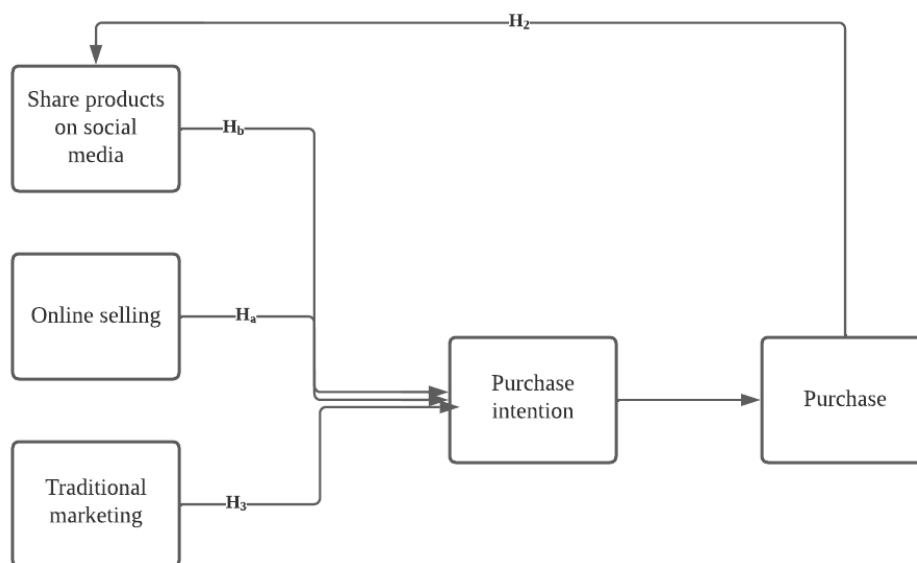


Figure. 1 Structure Model

4. Results

4.1 Frequency Analysis of Demographic Variables

According to Table 1, the numerical characteristics of the demographic variables can be shown. It reflects the distribution of respondents in this survey. Among them, the mean is the trend. The standard deviation is the volatility.

The frequency analysis results of each variable show that the distribution is basically in line with the requirements of the sample survey (Table 1). In the gender survey, women accounted for 66.3%, and men accounted for 33.7%. It indicates that this survey is more inclined toward the willingness of women. In terms of age structure, there were only three subjects aged 26-30. The participants aged 21-30 were analyzed to reduce the error when analyzing the data.

Table 1. Frequency analysis of demographic variables

Variable	Options	Frequency	Percentage	Average value	Standard deviation
Gender	Man	91	33.70%	1.66	0.47
	Woman	179	66.30%		
Age	Under 20 years old	58	21.50%	3.14	1.63
	21-25 years old	74	27.40%		
	26-30 years old	3	1.10%		
	31-40 years old	43	15.90%		
	Above 41 years old	92	34.10%		
Occupation	Students	97	35.90%	2.62	1.54
	Employees	53	19.60%		
	Graduate	22	8.10%		
	Freelancer	51	18.90%		
	Other	47	17.40%		

4.2 Reliability And Validity Tests

4.2.1 Social Media Creates Purchase Intension

Table 2 shows that the standardized reliability coefficient of Social Media Creates Purchase is 0.91. The value of the reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, and the closer it is to 1, the higher the reliability is. The result of this analysis is 0.91, indicating high reliability. The reliability coefficient of each item after deletion shows that they are all less than 0.91 of the totals. Therefore, there is no need to change the Social Media Creates Purchase questionnaire.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis in Social media creates purchase intension

	The average of the scale after the item is deleted	The scale variance after the item is deleted	The revised item is related to the total	Square multiple correlations	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
A1	13.57	14.711	0.723	0.526	0.887	
A2	13.52	14.937	0.763	0.77	0.879	0.903
A3	13.53	14.727	0.782	0.78	0.875	

4.2.2 Social Media Creates Purchase

Table 3 shows that the standardized reliability coefficient of Social Media Creates Purchase is 0.91. The value of the reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, and the closer it is to 1, the higher the reliability is. The result of this analysis is 0.91, indicating high reliability. The reliability coefficient of each item after deletion shows that they are all less than 0.91 of the totals. Therefore, there is no need to change the Social Media Creates Purchase questionnaire.

Table 3. Reliability Analysis in Social media creates purchase

	The average of the scale after the item is deleted	The scale variance after the item is deleted	The revised item is related to the total	Square multiple correlations	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
C1	3.2	1.333	0.834	0.696	0	
C2	3.2	1.333	0.834	0.696	0	0.91

4.2.3 Customers Choose to Order Online

As can be seen in Table 4, Choose to Order Online is 0.878. The value of the reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, and the closer it is to 1, the higher the reliability is. The result of this analysis is 0.878, indicating high reliability. The reliability coefficient of each item after deletion shows that they are all less than 0.878 of the totals. Therefore, there is no need to change the survey questions on Customers Choose to Order Online.

Table 4. Reliability Analysis in Customers choose to order online

	The average of the scale after the item is deleted	The scale variance after the item is deleted	The revised item is related to the total	Square multiple correlations	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
D1	3.39	1.297	0.782	0.612	0	
D2	3.49	1.356	0.782	0.612	0	0.878

4.2.4 Traditional Marketing Appeal

According to the reliability analysis in Table 5, the standardized reliability coefficient of Traditional Marketing Appeal is 0.812. The value of the reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, and the closer it is to 1, the higher the reliability is. The result of this analysis is 0.812, indicating that the reliability is good. The deleted reliability coefficient of each item shows that they are all less than the overall value of 0.812. Therefore, the Traditional Marketing Appeal survey questions need not be adjusted.

Table 5. Reliability Analysis in Traditional marketing appeal

	The average of the scale after the item is deleted	The scale variance after the item is deleted	The revised item is related to the total	Square multiple correlations	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
E1	10.09	9.231	0.521	0.298	0.811	0.812
E2	10.68	7.486	0.659	0.482	0.751	
E3	10.46	7.401	0.689	0.479	0.735	
E4	10.21	8.274	0.664	0.456	0.75	

4.2.5 Customers Share Products on Social Media

Table 6 shows that the standardized reliability coefficient of Customers Share Products on Social Media is 0.94. The value of the reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, and the closer it is to 1, the higher the reliability is. The result of this analysis is 0.94, indicating that the reliability is excellent. The reliability coefficient of each item deleted shows that they are all less than 0.94 of the totals. Therefore, the questions of Customers Share Products on Social Media do not need to be modified.

Table 6. Reliability Analysis in Customers share products on social media

	The average of the scale after the item is deleted	The scale variance after the item is deleted	The revised item is related to the total	Square multiple correlations	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
B1	9.14	10.992	0.888	0.855	0.913	0.94
B2	9.09	10.91	0.905	0.868	0.907	
B3	9.16	11.253	0.902	0.815	0.909	
B4	8.83	12.257	0.743	0.582	0.957	

4.2.6 Overall Reliability Coefficient

According to the overall reliability coefficient, the Klonbach coefficient based on the standardized item was 0.953 (Table 7), indicating that the reliability of the questionnaire was very high [20].

Table 7. Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on normalization terms	N
0.953	0.953	15

4.2.7 Validity Analysis

According to Table 8's results of the exploratory factor analysis above, the coefficient of the KMO test is 0.917, and the coefficient range of the KMO test is 0-1. The closer it is to 1, the better the validity of the questionnaire [20].

The significance of the spherical test shows that the significance of this test is infinitely close to 0. The null hypothesis of poor questionnaire validity was rejected, so the validity of the questionnaire is great.

Table 8. KMO and Bartlett test Result

KMO and Bartlett test			
KMO			0.917
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square		2468.982
	df		105
	P value		0.000

4.3 Difference Test

4.3.1 Difference Tests on Gender

Table 9, shows that there are gender differences in each dimension of Starbucks' digital marketing. The significance test of purchasing intentions yielded by social media in gender is 0.073, greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates no significant difference in the purchase desire generated by social media marketing among different genders. Similarly, there are no significant gender differences in customers' choice to order online, traditional marketing appeal, or customer sharing of products on social media. However, according to the mean value, women scored slightly higher than men in the surveys on social media marketing, purchasing intentions, online ordering, traditional marketing attractiveness, and sharing products on social media.

Table 9. Difference tests Result in Gender

	Gender	N	Average value	Sd	t	Sig
Social media creates purchase intension	Man	59	3.25	1.00	-1.79	0.076
	Woman	114	3.52	0.91		
Social media creates purchase	Man	59	3.00	1.19	-1.69	0.093
	Woman	114	3.30	1.05		
Customers choose to order online	Man	59	3.28	1.10	-1.37	0.173
	Woman	114	3.52	1.08		
Traditional marketing appeal	Man	59	3.30	0.94	-1.58	0.116
	Woman	114	3.53	0.90		
Customers share products on social media	Man	59	2.89	1.19	-1.10	0.274
	Woman	114	3.09	1.07		

4.3.2 Difference Tests on Age

According to the above results of one-way ANOVA (Table 10), in these five dimensions, the significance is less than 0.05, indicating that each dimension has a difference with age.

Based on the results of multiple comparisons, social media marketing was most likely to elicit purchase intent from customers under the age of 20 and 31-40. And it is least attractive to customers aged 21-30. Young people have a mind of their own. Customers under the age of 20 and 31-40 tend to order online, while customers aged 21-30 and 41+ years old generally use apps and applets to purchase. Regarding the appeal of traditional marketing, coupons and gift cards are more attractive

to customers under 20 and 31-40. However, they are less attractive to customers aged 21-30. Customers under 20 and 31-40 are more likely to share a satisfied Starbucks product with others on social media, but customers aged 21-30 have a lower desire to share.

Table 10. Difference tests Result in Age

Variable	Options	N	Average value	S.d.	F	Sig
Social media creates purchase intension	Under 20 years old	30	3.85	0.89	4.727	0.001
	21-25 years old	65	3.21	0.92		
	26-30 years old	2	2.6	0.85		
	31-40 years old	22	3.88	0.86		
	Above 41 years old	54	3.29	0.91		
Social media creates purchase	Under 20 years old	30	3.62	1.13	4.953	0.001
	21-25 years old	65	2.87	1.06		
	26-30 years old	2	2.75	1.06		
	31-40 years old	22	3.84	0.94		
	Above 41 years old	54	3.11	1.06		
Customers choose to order online	Under 20 years old	30	3.9	0.93	4.812	0.001
	21-25 years old	65	3.16	1.09		
	26-30 years old	2	2.5	0.71		
	31-40 years old	22	4	1.04		
	Above 41 years old	54	3.32	1.05		
Traditional marketing appeal	Under 20 years old	30	3.87	0.88	4.838	0.001
	21-25 years old	65	3.25	0.84		
	26-30 years old	2	2.38	0.53		
	31-40 years old	22	3.89	0.88		
	Above 41 years old	54	3.33	0.93		
Customers share products on social media	Under 20 years old	30	3.54	1.14	6.703	0
	21-25 years old	65	2.63	1.01		
	26-30 years old	2	2.25	0.35		
	31-40 years old	22	3.69	0.99		
	Above 41 years old	54	2.94	1.06		

4.4 Five-point Likert Scale

As shown in Table 11, compared with digital marketing, the score of traditional marketing is 3.45, slightly higher than that of digital marketing. It indicates that traditional marketing is still the main reason Starbucks attracts customers. In the ranking of customers' purchases of Starbucks, Starbucks'

products and brand awareness are the main reasons customers choose Starbucks. Customers who decided to buy Starbucks products based on social media recommendations from friends and netizens scored 3.6 and 3.58, respectively, ranking third and fourth. Customers who found the WeChat mini program and Starbucks APP convenient ranked sixth and seventh on the list of reasons for buying. Notably, customers are more likely to place orders on the WeChat mini program than on the Starbucks APP in China, with the WeChat mini program scoring 0.1 points higher than the APP. Although it can be seen from the table that Starbucks still attracts customers with the traditional marketing mode, the marketing methods of gift cards, coupons, and Starbucks membership are not the main marketing means to attract customers. These two aspects scored 3.35 and 3.13, respectively. It is debatable whether this old marketing approach can still increase engagement in the modern era.

It is mentioned in the literature review that some customers become part of the marketing and recommend Starbucks products they are satisfied with on social media. This research shows this is true, but not everyone recommends Starbucks products to others on social media. For example, questions about whether customers would recommend products on social media scored less than 3 points. Due to the particularity of social media, tweets sent by one person are shown to multiple friends. The score of seeing Starbucks elements on social media is 3.24, so Starbucks has some potential in social media marketing. This marketing model is very efficient.

Generally, the average score for each of the five dimensions was more than 3. Traditional marketing about products and brands is the main way Starbucks attracts customers. Customers also prefer to order online. Social media can get customers to buy, but customers' desire to share products on social media is modest.

Table 11. Score of Likert Scale

Dimension	score	Questions	score
Social media creates purchase intension	3.57	You see Starbucks advertising campaigns on social media and want to try new products, seasonal limits, etc	3.54
		You see your friends' shares on social media and want to try it out for yourself	3.6
		You see recommendations from netizens on social media and want to try it for yourself	3.58
Social media creates purchase	3.2	You'll often choose to buy Starbucks products because you see Starbucks ads or Tweets on social media	3.2
		Your friends will choose to buy the products you share because of your Starbucks-related tweets on social media	3.2
Customers choose to order online	3.44	You think the Starbucks WeChat Mini Program is convenient to use, so you choose to buy Starbucks products online	3.49
		You think the Starbucks app is convenient to use, so you choose to buy Starbucks products online	3.39
Traditional marketing appeal	3.45	About why you buy Starbucks – you like Starbucks' designated products (e.g. Frappuccino, Americano, etc.).	3.73
		You are a Member of Starbucks and can earn points by purchasing Starbucks so that you can get some benefits, giveaways or peripherals on future purchases	3.13
		You've received a Starbucks gift card or coupon from a friend or someone else and want to use them for the duration	3.35
		You think that Starbucks, as a well-known big brand, has a complete system of product control, service quality and after-sales processing, so choose to buy Starbucks products.	3.6
Customers share	3.02	About how engaged Starbucks users are on social media — After you buy Starbucks, you send product-related posts on your favourite social media	2.94

products on social media	You buy Starbucks with friends and send product-related posts on social platforms that you and your friends use	2.98
	When you share your daily routine on social media, you'll include Information about Starbucks in your Tweets	2.91
	You'll see your friends or users post Starbucks-related tweets on your favourite social media	3.24

4.5 Structure Equation Modeling

4.5.1 Model adjustment

Based on the setting of the questionnaire and the comparison of the model paramant of multiple test. We eliminated two dimensions which are Customers Choose to Order Online and Traditional Marketing Appeal from the structural equation model in this paper. The model consists of three dimensions: purchase behavior, purchase intention and social media product sharing. As shown in the Figure 2.

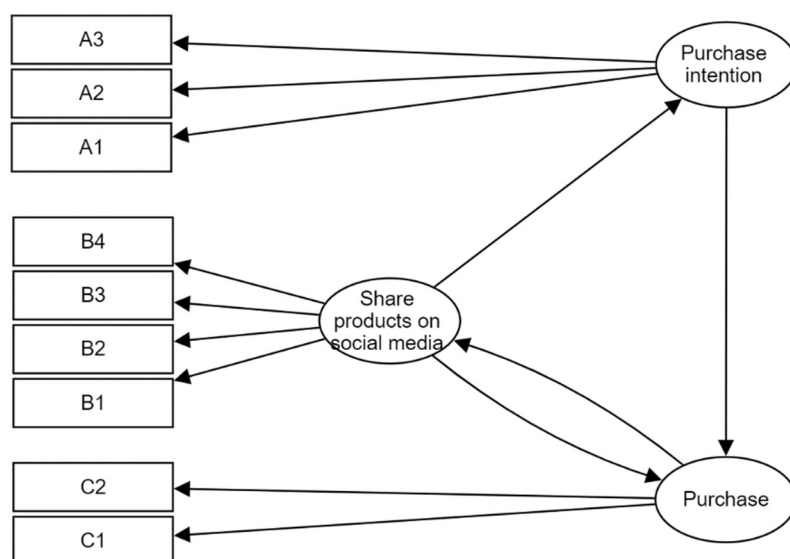


Figure. 2 Fixed Model

On the basis of this model, the above hypotheses are revised, and the revised hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Starbucks' social media marketing will have a significant positive impact on customers' purchase of Starbucks products

Hypothesis 1a: Starbucks products shared by users on social media will have a significant positive impact on customer purchasing behavior

Hypothesis 1b: Starbucks products shared by users on social media will have a significant positive impact on customers' purchase intention

Hypothesis 2: After purchasing Starbucks, customers have a significant intention to share it on social media.

4.5.2 Modeling

As can be seen from the above Table 12. The ratio of chi-square degrees of freedom is slightly greater than 3, but within the acceptable range of less than 5. The values of GFI and RMSEA were slightly beyond the judgment standard, and other fitting indexes reached the standard. According to Hair et al., this model will be accepted when only a few indicators fail to reach the standard but the

vast majority do [21]. In conclusion, the fitting level of structural equation model constructed in this paper is acceptable.

Table 12. Model Parameter

Normal index	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	CFI	NFI	NNFI
Criteria	-	-	<3	>0.9	<0.10	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Value	93.59	23	4.069	0.885	0.133	0.957	0.944	0.933
Other index	TLI	AGFI	IFI	PGFI	SRMR			
Criteria	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	<0.1			
Value	0.933	0.775	0.957	0.452	0.062			

4.5.3 Structural equation model validation

The path coefficient results of the model are shown in the Table 13.

Table 13. Path Coefficient

X	→	Y	SE	z (CR)	p	Coeff.
Purchase intention	→	Purchase	0.077	2.907	0.004	0.178
Purchase	→	Share products on social media	0.095	-6.095	***	-0.506
Share products on social media	→	Purchase intention	0.059	8.225	***	0.693
Share products on social media	→	Purchase	0.062	11.939	***	0.842

Note: *** means $p < 0.001$

As shown in the above table, the P-values of these four relationships are all less than 0.05, which indicating that they all have significant effects. Sharing Starbucks products on social media has a significant positive impact on purchasing intension and behaviors. Purchase intention also has a significant impact on purchase behavior. But the behavior of purchasing Starbucks products has a negative impact on the products on social media, which further indicates that customers are not willing to share the products on social media after purchasing them. The simulated path plots in this study are shown in the Figure 3, with solid lines representing statistically significant regression relationships. And the standardized path coefficients shown in the Figure 3.

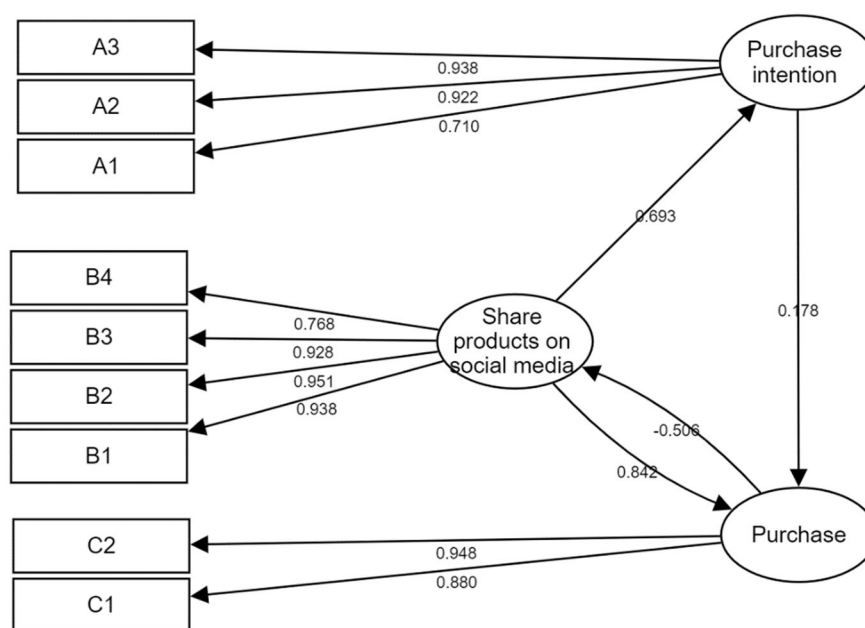


Figure. 3 Standardized Path Coefficients

Based on the above processing and analysis results, the research hypothesis of this paper is verified. The verification results are as follows:

Table 14. Hypothesis Verification

	Hypothesis	Result
H1	Starbucks' social media marketing will have a significant positive impact on customers' purchase of Starbucks products	True
H1 _a	Starbucks products shared by users on social media will have a significant positive impact on customer purchasing behavior	True
H1 _b	Starbucks products shared by users on social media will have a significant positive impact on customers' purchase intention	True
H2	After purchasing Starbucks, customers have a significant intention to share it on social media	False

5. Discussion

5.1 Summary

According to literature research, the catering industry has started to utilize digital marketing to improve user stickiness through online ordering methods such as APP and WeChat mini program. Starbucks is no exception. In addition, Starbucks worldwide carries out digital marketing through social media. The interaction and sharing among netizens on social media are conducive to making people have purchase intention. Moreover, Starbucks actively promotes customer engagement on social media through effective marketing strategies.

With the questionnaire survey, this paper studies the digital marketing model of Starbucks as an example through the Likert scale and structural equation model and draws the following conclusions.

There are age differences in the digital marketing of Starbucks. As the data shows, there is no obvious gender difference in the marketing means studied by the authors in China. But in terms of age, young people under 30 are more likely to buy products online, such as using apps, mini-programs, and third-party platforms. The appeal of social media marketing to different age groups is also further,

with young people aged 21-30 having the least appeal, and they seem to have less desire to share products on social media than others.

Digital marketing can attract customers and become one of the important reasons for them to buy Starbucks products. From the perspective of the reasons why customers buy Starbucks products, the primary reason is the product quality and brand reputation of Starbucks. Second, social media and online sales have helped Starbucks drive customer traffic. Among them, social media is supported by the structural equation model, which could improve customers' purchase intention and purchase behavior. It shows that the current digital marketing of Starbucks' is effective.

Customers are less likely to advertise Starbucks products on social media in China. While Starbucks' digital marketing attracts customers, they don't often post the "Starbucks element" on social media. "How to engage customers involved in social media to share goods" might be something Starbucks' Marketing Department should consider.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the above summaries, this paper puts forward some suggestions. Improve the social media spread of the product. As mentioned above, the most popular way customers get Starbucks information is through social platforms such as online friends' and friends' recommendations. Therefore, customers must be encouraged to generate content, meaning more users must post original content on social media. Users display or provide original content to other users through the Internet platform [22]. Users can be encouraged to send product-related content through some offers. They can also hire anchors and food bloggers to implement the purpose of marketing. This method is a great way to effectively market on social media and create a desire to buy.

Meet the needs of different age groups. Based on Table 4-9, it can be found that Starbucks has the lowest attraction among people aged 21-30, which is the age that people have just entered society. Not all will choose Starbucks, which is highly positioned in the Chinese market. Instead, they may be more inclined to buy lower-priced competitors [23, 24]. The market research department of Starbucks can investigate this group, develop products to meet this group, and launch activities to attract their attention.

For the second quarter of fiscal 2022, Starbucks' global market accomplished same-store sales growth of 7%, driven by a 4% increase in average customer unit price and a 3% increase in same-store transaction volume. With the new digital Starbucks, North American market performance has been outstanding recently. But net revenue in China fell 14 percent as same-store transactions, and average customer prices fell in the country [25].

According to the above statistics, low-cost performance and unattractive publicity are why customers have never bought Starbucks. As low-priced competitors such as Luckin Coffee and Michelle Ice City compete with Starbucks more and more fiercely, Starbucks should stabilize its market share in China through digital marketing and brand innovation [23, 24].

6. Conclusion

Under the continuous development of digital marketing, this paper analyzes Starbucks' digital marketing in the Chinese market and explores whether Starbucks' digital marketing strategy is effective. According to the literature analysis, this paper extracts two dimensions of Mini Programs marketing and APP and Social Media marketing for analysis and compares them with traditional marketing methods. With the data collected from questionnaires and analyzed through the Likert scale, this paper concludes that the assurance of the brand and the quality of its products are the main reasons for attracting customers in traditional marketing. In addition, the convenience of marketing in the app and mini-programs and the attraction of sharing on social media are also factors for customers to consider buying Starbucks. These two digital marketing methods attract more than traditional membership cards and points.

By constructing a structural equation model, this paper finds that Starbucks' digital marketing strategy is an effective marketing approach to attract consumers to make purchases. Starbucks' social media marketing promotes customers' purchase of Starbucks products. However, in China, consumers do not have a significant willingness to share Starbucks products on social media after purchasing them. If Starbucks could increase customers' intention to share or hire people to promote on social media, that would benefit Starbucks' marketing strategy and increase Starbucks' sales and profit.

This paper proposes a structural equation model based on social media marketing, which explores the strengths and weaknesses of Starbucks's marketing strategies applied on social media in the Chinese market. The data are collected from a questionnaire, thoroughly analyzed, and highly convincing.

This paper also has some shortcomings in the research content. In the data collection process, a total of 280 data were collected, but a significant number of them had not drunk Starbucks and could not complete the questionnaire. Finally, 173 valid questionnaires deviated from the expected 300 data collected; therefore, this result may yield some bias. In addition, the proportion of women in this data is large, so the findings are biased towards women. This paper also studies Starbucks' digital marketing only in the Chinese market without exploring Starbucks' digital marketing strategies worldwide.

In conclusion, given the limited academic ability, this study only empirically analyzes and models digital marketing based on social media sharing products, hoping to provide scholars with research ideas on digital marketing. It is asserted that with the exploration of more scholars in the field of digital marketing, better research methods and results will be coming up in the future.

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