

Path Analysis of KOL Marketing and its influence on consumers' purchase decisions: Taking the Beauty Make-Up Blogger on Tiktok as an Example

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Abstract. In recent years, with the rapid development of the self-media industry, social platform users have become a wide range and many users. Meanwhile, a large number of KOL emerged. The social platform has become one of the main ways of advertising communication, and brands and consumers have also favored KOL advertising marketing. Although there is yet to be a successful KOL, there may still be a need for relevant theories or clear ideas for many bloggers who are developing or aspiring to become KOL. Therefore, this study explores the impact of KOL marketing characteristics on consumer purchase decisions. From the perspective of consumers, based on the method of comparative analysis of fewer cases, this paper first makes a case study of two Tiktok makeup bloggers, then analyzes the internal mechanism of KOL marketing, and finally obtains the benign path of KOL marketing, which provide replicable reference experience for KOL who operate their accounts or who want to be KOL.

Keywords: Tiktok; KOL Advertising; Social Media; purchase decision.

1. Introduction

With the continuous development of social media in recent years, the arrival of the era of self-media, and the proliferation of social platform users, KOL people have gotten more attention. Many key opinion leaders have emerged on the Internet, and there has been an increase in videos with goods implanted, and people have become more receptive to it. With the development of information technology, social media has gradually become an important way for consumers to obtain information, understand products and make consumption decisions, and realize the efficient connection between "people" and "goods" through social media [1]. The social platform that gathers the main consumer groups has become one of the main channels of advertising communication, and the way of advertising communication has been innovated. Among the most popular marketing methods is vital opinion leader (KOL) marketing. The KOL includes internet celebrities and stars, which refers to those with substantial influence and scope in social networks. KOLs generally realize traffic using product endorsements, live broadcasts, etc. Because of the adage "those who get traffic get the world," the number of KOL fans determines a KOL's income [2]. KOL marketing has attracted attention in marketing and communication at home and abroad. KOL advertising marketing gives full play to the advantages of social platform coverage and influence, with the characteristics of a high conversion rate. Its advertising effect is to focus on user needs, customize the content, user loyalty, and establish two-way interaction and trust relationships. KOL advertising value is consumer-oriented, mentioned in the KOL model development trend: platform verticalization, KOL's specialization, verticalization, and intensive exposure, from "pyramid" to "inverted pyramid." [3] In recent years, KOL advertising marketing has been paid attention to by the field of communication and marketing, showing a professional, more targeted, and sustainable development trend. The consumer purchase decision process can be divided into confirmation of demand, information collection, selection and judgment, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation. In the academe, there has been a very comprehensive, in-depth study of the theory of consumer decision-making with mature research models, and there has also been a summary of the influencing factor. There has been much-related research. However, it is generally focused on the value of advertising, advertising strategy, and

marketing model. Still, there is detailed edlear research on the relationship between the impact on consumers' purchasing decisions.

This study is based on the few cases comparison methods in the case study, taking some makeup KOL in Tiktok as examples, based on restoring four positive and negative KOL marketing cases, deeply discusses the internal mechanism of KOL marketing, and analyzes the future state of KOL marketing. At this stage, the impact of KOL advertising marketing on consumers' purchase decisions is vital to certain practices, particularly finance, through the expansion of social platform business. It can improve the efficiency and benefit of brands carrying goods in the future and find a benign path for KOL marketing. The maturity of the KOL cooperation model is likely to incubate a complete industrial chain to provide more jobs for society. For the marketing industry, emerging markets and more opportunities can provide a continuous supply for the industry. At the same time, this study can be more targeted to fill the current gap in this field.

2. Text How KOL Helps Products Capture Consumers: Two Positive Case Studies

This section describes two positive examples of KOL marketing. Take Tiktok makeup KOL @Luo Wangyu and @Yongzai Leo as examples of retrospection of their popularity, explain the reasons why they can maintain a good reputation, and deconstruct their respective marketing styles with good feedback.

2.1 @Luo Wangyu

Luo Wangyu has become the most capable beauty makeup KOL except Li Jiaqi in Chinese Tiktok. The reasons for his popularity are as follows: first, his positioning as a "professional makeup blogger." His video is full of professional knowledge, revealing the principles and ingredients of popular products, conducting objective evaluations, and teaching the basic techniques of skincare and makeup. He refuted rumors about some bloggers' and brands' pseudoscience ideas, false propaganda, and excessive marketing. Second, unlike most bloggers, Luo Wangyu, in the interests of fans, often calls on fans, not to buy-keep judgment in the face of dazzling advertisements.

He released the video "I hope my girls build their judgment" and gained millions of fans, showing that this "altruistic attitude" is very popular with the audience. Finally, Luo Wangyu interacts with fans in multiple dimensions online and offline, especially in the comment area, which embodies a friendly and humorous image in addition to professional rigor, weakens the distance between fans and fans, and makes his personality more complete.

The features of his promotion are as follows: first of all, he has achieved "attach importance to word-of-mouth, cherish wings." To maintain the high degree of trust of fans in bloggers, their team will choose products carefully. Luo Wangyu will objectively evaluate Amway and complaints coexist for the promotion of products, making the audience feel more credible. The blogger repeatedly emphasized this point in the video, which deepened consumers' impressions. The second point is that the frequency of promotion is moderate. Videos with advertisements are not only about ads but also contain knowledge about makeup or skin care. The combination of advertising and professional expertise will not only enable the audience to gain something but also reduce the audience's avoidance of advertising and create consumer demand so that the product can be effectively promoted.

2.2 @Yongzai Leo

In most cases, in Tiktok, the shorter the video duration is, the higher the completion rate would be. However, Yongzai Leo can still accumulate many fans even though the video length is 3 to 5 minutes. His popularity and a good reputation can be attributed to the following three aspects: the first thing is his unique means of expression. Makeup bloggers breaking through the conventional personalized face is a powerful way to attract users' attention. By shooting videos, they can accurately express their appearance and personality characteristics, transmit make-up information to the audience, and

stimulate their interest [4]. Previously, Yongzai Leo accumulated a certain number of fans by teaching practical make-up techniques in a standard way. But he becomes famous after releasing "can't even wear foundation makeup? Watch this video a hundred times! ". In this video, he uses inverse color to show the audience the right and wrong techniques in foundation makeup. The series of contrast color makeup teaching hit the point of the audience that they still can't make it after watching common makeup teaching videos. This series formed his distinct personal label. The second thing is intensive expertise. Although his videos are long, they have great content, from which the audience can learn a lot of professional makeup knowledge without getting bored. The third thing is a hidden solid, and sincere people setup. Centering on expertise, YongZai Leo will conduct tests on popular and controversial products to enhance the credibility of its content.

The features of his promotion are as follows: The rise of the blogger has the following characteristics: promotion is often combined with makeup techniques or skin care knowledge, which makes the content of the advertisement more reliable and the scene more specific; his promotion frequency is much lower than that of other beauty bloggers, which makes the ad more valuable. In this way, the products promoted by the blogger are usually labeled as "approved by me," and fans are more willing to pay for their sincerity. The cooperation between the blogger and the brand to achieve a win-win situation through business cooperation is a standard marketing method in the self-media of beauty make-up videos. A simple Weibo retweet interaction can enhance the popularity of both sides. Promoting people with similarities among their fan groups can locate their audience more efficiently and accurately. This can increase mutual awareness and produce brand extensions, production topics, and so on [5]. Yangzai Leo and another beauty makeup blogger, Huamei, who has a good reputation, also cooperated with a brand called Galimard to launch a foundation. This cooperation has gained a high degree of attention.

3. Limits and bottlenecks of KOL Marketing: two negative cases

This section will bring two negative issues and an analysis of two Tiktok makeup bloggers who previously had a large number of fans, but due to different reasons led to word-of-mouth decline and fan loss afterward, trying to find out the causes of this phenomenon, respectively showing the minefields of KOL marketing.

3.1 @Xianmu SamChak

As an early beauty blogger on Tiktok, Xianmu SamChak has accumulated many followers with high-quality make-up videos and practical information shared as a makeup artist who had studied at the French make-up Academy for several years. However, his word-of-mouth has declined in recent years. The basic reasons are as follows: first of all, his early reputation for carrying goods is not bad, but because his team does not have high requirements for promoting products, he has repeatedly recommended products that are widely recognized with poor quality and a sense of use. And the content of recommended products in the video is too much, which disgusts fans because it is too commercial, which also reduces the audience's trust in the blogger and weakens the influence of the blogger himself. Secondly, as a blogger who teaches makeup skills, his later content is mostly advertising. Because of frequent updates, there is no time to improve, and video quality is under expectation. Video content, as the foundation, can not meet fans' expectations, which naturally leads to a decline in fan loyalty and traffic conversion rate. Finally, failing to deal with the relationship with the audience, he was arrogant in response to the exposed data of his fans and even made discordant behaviors such as hanging people and quarreling.

3.2 @Chishangdoujiaowochimugangxian

After the popularity of @ Woshizhangkaiyi as a "grumpy blogger," she also won a group of fans for her "true temperament" setting, careless video style, and distinct personal identity.

But then there were more negative comments about the blogger; the primary reasons are as follows: first, as a makeup blogger, her makeup skills have always been criticized. Without the support of convincing technology, the product recommendation cannot be persuasive, and the audience will not pay for the promotion. Secondly, its video style tends to be vulgar. The homogenized and offensive content is a one-off emotional carnival under the marketing background, lack of rational attitude, and poor and naked value. The continuous spread of such content also means constantly eroding social thinking and reducing the interest and character of the public [5]. Although the blogger attracted fans in the early days by relying on the "noisy" video style, viewers will get tired of the immutable kind of blinds-eyeballs over time. The blogger's content has been like this long and has yet to progress. Secondly, many netizens reported that the blogger's advertisement could also be seen in many other tweets. This kind of all-pervasive excessive marketing will arouse the resentment of the audience. Last, the improper handling of adverse events also led to the collapse of the blogger's reputation. The blogger did not respond in time to the advisements on the Internet but chose to ignore them and continue to bring goods to life and publish advertising works. Full of a robust commercial atmosphere, but also did not come up with a sincere attitude; the second is to choose evasion, control and evaluation, and other negative ways.

4. The core concept, operation process, and landing path of KOL marketing

Professor Savage put forward the theory of subjective expected utility maximization in 1954, which holds that consumers' decision-making choices are based on the emotional expected utility value [6]. American communicator Katz introduced the theory of "use and satisfaction" in 1959 [8]. Since then, the concept of "use and satisfaction" has been widely used and developed and was formally put forward by Katz in 1970. From the audience's perspective, the theory of "use and satisfaction" is that the mass media has an impact on people's psychology and behavior in the audience. The theory holds that the audience restricts the press through the active use of the media. And based on the needs and wishes of the audience, highlight the audience's initiative and the status of the audience [9]. In 1979, psychologists Kahneman and Tversky put forward the prospect theory, which holds that consumers use the weight function and value function to describe the subjective value of goods and buy goods with considerable overall value. In the 1990s, a research group led by German psychologist Gigerenzer G. studied the "ecological rationality" of human decision-making. It proposed that people adapt to environmental changes in a "fast and frugal" way and make quick responses and decisions [6]. In the "Analysis of influencing factors of Consumer purchase decision" published in 2003, Professor Guocai Xu proposed that the influencing factors can be divided into personal consumer, psychological, and social aspects.

4.1 The process of KOL marketing

In the marketing way of short video promotion, consumers arouse purchase interest through attention, generate transaction behavior, share the influence of more people's attention through multiple channels, form spontaneous and continuous cyclic fission, and sales will show a geometric growth. The marginal cost of overall sales will continue to decrease [7]. The promotion of bloggers has become the focus of many brands, especially those that match the target groups and the core users of the platform. These KOL advertising marketing for consumers' purchase decisions are mainly reflected in the three processes of purchase decisions: identification process, cognitive process, and action process.

In the identification process, the situation is that consumers originally had no intention to buy but aroused interest after watching the content of the KOL advertisement, and the purchase demand was stimulated. The advertising content of KOL is generally for the popularization of knowledge, the teaching of basic techniques, good things Amway and so on, which often provides users with specific scenarios for the use of a product.

In the cognitive process, the situation is represented by the information provided by KOL when consumers have generated purchase demand and collected relevant information on the Internet. The advertising content of KOL is generally the principal popularization and evaluation of a specific category of products. Under this type of advertising, bloggers will compare different products or explain the efficacy principle of the products to consumers.

In the activation process, the situation is shown as follows: the entrance of the video or article with the purchase link or the coupon jumps to the link entrance of the product details page, and the KOL anchor brings the goods to life.

The above situation puts the purchase within reach of consumers, reduces other links in the middle, is more direct, and gives birth to the birth of consumer behavior.

4.2 The landing path of KOL marketing

In the network platform of information overload, how make the marketing effect of KOL advertisement more outstanding?

Here are some KOL marketing paths that can be replicated by combining the impact on consumer purchase decisions and the above four cases:

4.2.1 Accurate positioning, establish and maintain a sincere image.

As KOL, we must clearly understand our positioning and continue to create vertical content to attract more accurate target groups. From the above four cases, we can see that a sincere person sets up the necessities of a blogger with a good reputation, while a blogger with a declining reputation is missing. Sincerity is the premise of word-of-mouth marketing. Consumers will show greater trust in the information provided by sincere bloggers when collecting data, which can make the advertising marketing of KOL achieve better results.

But it must be noted that once there is a crack in the sincere person, the trust of the talent in the user's heart will falter instantly and face the risk of collapse at any time. Therefore, the long-term maintenance of human settings is a more detailed lesson for people than creating sincere human sets [8].

4.2.2 Maintain professional and practical high-quality content, promote frequency control, and do an excellent job in quality control.

Excellent video content is the core of consumer interest. To maintain the high quality of content, KOL should end plagiarism, false propaganda, and other behaviors. At the same time, it should improve personal cultivation and business ability to increase fan stickiness with high-quality content. In addition, the content can be carried out in scenarios close to life. The scene is the sum of the relationship between people and the surrounding elements. Through the joint action of complex features such as place and scenery and soft factors such as space and atmosphere, the scene makes the communication object enter the preset psychological state and understand the meaning the content wants to express. Cross-scene shaping can also help users eliminate the shackles of real situations, expand the sensory experience while removing the restrictions of time and space, and arouse users' interest in further understanding the content [9]. The purpose of non-artistic scene construction close to users' life is to increase users' familiarity by creating specific scenes to achieve the communication effect expected by bloggers. These life scenes are closely related to users' lives, making it easy for users to feel intimate and self-related [4]. Advertising organically combined with such content, on the one hand, can benefit from the "sense of satisfaction" of the video and reduce consumers' avoidance of advertising. On the other hand, these videos create a practical scene for the audience to use the product in their daily life, which is more likely to arouse consumers' willingness to buy and stimulate purchase demand. It is worth noting that frequent advertisements may cause disgust among fans, so the frequency of promotion should be controlled, the choice of promotional products should also be careful, and at least brand tone should be done before the climbing. If the wrong promadvertisingds to a decline in word-of-mouth, the loss of fan trust outweighs the gain.

4.2.3 Deal with adverse events timely and adequately.

The impact of the human collapse on Internet celebrities is as follows: the degree of attention decreases, comments tend to be stigmatized, and the ability to realize cash declines. The re-spread of online word-of-mouth is strong, and there are many participants. The network word-of-mouth is published on the Internet by the original publisher, which can be spread many times. The participants are receivers and communicators, playing a dual role. Therefore, its spread speed and breadth are much higher than traditional word-of-mouth [10]. With the help of the media, the fermented effects of adverse events tend to be more intense, even devastating. Therefore, handling adverse events should be timely and appropriate to minimize the negative impact and try our best to recover the lost fans. On the contrary, the most valuable news, entertainment information, social marketing, and other joyous events can be used, planned, and organized to attract more groups' attention. From the existing research, event marketing has the characteristics of sudden solid, high curiosity, and broad audience, which can achieve the fastest and best dissemination effect of information quickly [11].

5. Conclusion

This paper makes a rigorous case study of four typical bloggers on Tik Tok's platform, analyzes the performance of various accounts that may lead to relevant results, explores the key to good or bad word-of-mouth, analyzes advertisements, and sums up KOL account marketing paths that can be used for reference, which is beneficial to KOL bloggers in advertising promotion and account management. This study aims at the people who want to become KOL or have become KOL, want to work hard for a long time to provide reference advice, know how to operate the account better, and advertising marketing needs to pay attention. To improve the efficiency of cooperation between KOL and brands, the KOL advertising model is more mature, and the investment is proportional to the revenue brought by advertising. However, in addition to the consumer purchase decision-making process, the lack of a specific knowledge framework and theoretical knowledge support for KOL advertising marketing has yet to be discussed. If there is enough time and energy, a complete knowledge framework can be constructed, and a questionnaire survey and systematic research on the impact on consumers' purchase decisions from different aspects, such as the form of KOL advertising marketing, KOL image positioning, consumer preference and so on, can be conducted.

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