

A Case Study of Hi Mom's Social Media Marketing Strategy

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Abstract. Hi Mom is a movie released in Chinese New Year with widespread publicity and well-known movie stars. It became one of the hottest films in the 2021 Spring Festival Movie. The film grossed more than \$5 billion at the box office, which is undoubtedly a huge success. In addition to impressing audiences with a unique "family" storyline and a different narrative approach, the marketing and publicity strategies of a movie are also necessary. The research direction of this paper is mainly content and publicity. For example, the selling points and opportunities of films with a box office of more than 5 billion Yuan are worthy of deep analysis, especially the role production companies play and the way to implement early publicity and promotion. The research adopts qualitative analysis by using a case analysis. Comparing the early stage (before the movie is published), the middle stage (during the movie is released) and the late stage (after the movie is dropped), it is found that compared with the first two time stages, the late stage after the movie released is obviously short of play rate in video platform and click number in short videos. The theme of family films in Chinese film market is simple, and some films have some problems in late release. Some suggestions are continuing to promote the relevant elements, deepening the theme to impress the audience and promoting the marketing in more innovative ways.

Keywords: Maternal love; publicity strategy; film promotion; marketing.

1. Introduction

In recent years, there have been very few family films in the Chinese film market, and the existing ones are mostly made for the purpose of tear-jerking. For example, the tender movie All About My Mother, tells the story of a mother who always considers her family in every single piece of thing. When this mom is about to retire, she is diagnosed with a malignant tumor and the family spends the last moments together. The movie earned more than 100 million yuan at the box office in just six days after its release and has since been nominated and won many awards. Family is an objective social unit in society [1]. For individuals, "family" is an invisible identity existing in individual consciousness. The identity consciousness of the family is not only an abstract concept in the mind but also determines the boundary of the family. It will become a running mechanism when dealing with the internal relations of the family. Song of Spring, the film, about an 85-year-old mother taking care of her 65-year-old daughter with Alzheimer's disease, took 77.1 million yuan at the box office. These two movies are related to "mother" and "family affection" in the past three years, but in terms of box office revenue alone, there is still a big gap between them and Hi Mom. Obviously, it can be felt that the pre-publicity and post-release publicity of these two films were not strong enough, and the information audiences obtained was too simple. Also, according to the themes and contents, Hi Mom not only shows how Jia Ling and Li Huanying make efforts to achieve each other on the road of mutual redemption, but also depicts the group of women around Li Huanying who are affected by the family concept. From the point of view of the intention expressed here, it is much more meaningful than the mere introduction of the love between mother and daughter. Hi Mom 2021 is the beginning of the New Year movie boom. Detective Chinatown 3, a mystery comedy, lived up to expectations and did perfectly from all perspectives, taking in \$4.515 billion. New Gods: Nezha Reborn, a fantasy animation that may have skewed its audience towards children, grossed 456 million yuan. In contrast, Hi, Mom was a sellout, with some even going to the theater more than once to see the movie, grossed 5.413 billion yuan, becoming the second highest-grossing film of the year. If a film's box office is the best indicator of its commercial value, then the achievement of Hi, Mom also proves its influence and great success. Hi Mom is classified as fantasy and comedy in the film genre.

The eye-catching point is the family and comedy plot. The preparation and shooting of the film took three years. During this period, Jia voluntarily cut down on a lot of work. She thought that she had a shallow understanding of film, so Jia tried to impress the audience with her true feelings. In the early publicity, posters, MV, and trailers constantly come out, which means they have done enough preparatory work. Before the film is released, it gained certain popularity. Box office receipts soared, surpassing 5.4 billion yuan in just 57 days [2]. The methodology used in this movie are mixed method, qualitative is used for further extension in the movie plot analysis and quantitative method is used or data analysis and compasion.

2. Movie Analysis

2.1 Plots Introduction

Hi Mom, the film mainly tells the story that Jia Xiaoling, who just entered the university, experiencing a great rise and fall in her life. Determined to make her mother proud, she was devastated when her mother suffered a terrible accident. Jia Xiaoling in a state of emotional breakdown, unexpectedly back to 1981, and meet with her mother Li Huanying who is in her young-age, the mom and daughter become besties of the nearly same age. Jia Xiaoling thought that she could reverse time and space by virtue of her advanced thinking in real life, and change some life events, such as finding a husband with better background and appearance for Li Huanying. However, it turned out that her mother came back together in her past life with her without telling, which means they both lived in a parallel space.

2.2 Background

The film, which released in the Chinese mainland on Feb 12, 2021, is recomposed from a 2016 same-name sketch. Some of the plots and lines in the film are based on Jia's own experiences. The production is so thoughtful that it expresses the deep yearning for her mother and solemn farewell to the past.

2.3 Publicizing Platform

In its inaugural broadcast of the first season of "Comedy General Mobilization" on Zhejiang TV on September 10, 2016, "Hi Mom," which was originally a Jia Ling sketch, had a good crowd response. As a result, there was a strong reaction from longtime admirers at the premiere of the "Hi Mom" movie. With the participation of several comedic stars, including Jia Ling, Shen Teng, Chen He, and Zhang Xiaofei, and frequent news coverage of the film's production over the course of four years, spectators' expectations for the finished product have increased significantly. The shooting period started in September 2019 and will end in January 2020. In 2016, Jia Ling adapted her sketch Hi Mom into a film, which took three years to prepare and shoot. It was released in 2021 and won numerous awards. "Hi Mom" adopted short video propaganda and adjusted to the "fragmented" reading habits of the large audience. The publicity and distribution of the movie have significantly increased the contact rate with the audience thanks to its visual, multimedia, and comprehensive coverage of mass culture communication qualities. Hi, Mom was officially certified on TikTok (Hi mom2021), with 2,398,000 fans, 99,046 likes and 307 works (as of December 23). Since the selling points of this film are comedy and family affection, in the early promotion, the propagandistic department grasped these two directions and vigorously emphasized them on social media [3]. For example, on the platform TikTok, before the release of the movie, the official account mostly released content related to "funny trailers", "comedy lineup", "2016 sketch clips", "on-set tidbits", "and guest support from other actors". Additionally, the opening of the brief film depicted the topic of public opinion, "My father is the factory director," in a caustic and humorous manner, which helped to close the gap with the audience and fill them with amusement through the sense of immersion. The "Hi Mom" commercial component in the TikTok short video complies with the short video's communication regulation. Shorter and richer than before, the information grabs the audience's

attention instantly. It achieves interaction and emotional resonance with the viewer in the lighthearted and laid-back short video experience, and it creates a participatory fan culture. It provided a strong foundation for the movie's opening day of the Chinese New Year. The audience is immersed in brief video communication that uses standard multimedia sound and visual appearance. A short film TikTok is a well-liked, amusing, and down to earth form of communication. Additionally, hundreds of millions of consumers in China prefer the short videos of TikTok due to their low threshold and realizable features [4]. Meanwhile, it also borrowed resources to increase its popularity, such as the well-known TV show Happy Camp. This is exactly a win-win model. Actors' participation in the variety show brings resources and certain program effects, while viewers can also receive the signal and news of the film being promoted, thus increasing the attendance rate of the cinema.

3. Issues Illustrated

3.1 Storyline is Unclear

The movie's character relationship is a little unclear and the value is not perfectly presented. The mother-daughter relationship and love are the movie's primary themes, and the interactions between other characters are less important. In reality, some mothers would like to ask success of their children. She will throw a lavish dinner with Wang Qin when her child receives the admissions letter, which is an accurate representation of real reality. Thousands of families have a firmly held belief that wishing for their children's success is important. But in the film, Li Huanying only wants her child to be healthy and happy under the reconstruction of history. This is a surprising setting in the plot. Vertically speaking, in today's increasingly competitive society, parents do not want their children to get good grades, get a more satisfactory job, and have a more decent life, but parents also hope their children to be healthy and happy in their growth [5]. From a sociological standpoint, the movie somewhat reawakens modern women's self-consciousness. The movie Hello, Li Huanying presents us with a feminine perspective on the 1980s girls' attractiveness, independence, boldness, self-confidence, and upward mobility. When given the true option, lovely girls, like flowers, decide to have children of their own. There should be more than harsh hands, hunched shoulders, and wrinkled cheeks hiding behind the term "mother." "A mother is not simply a mother. She is her own first," will release them from the obligations of motherhood, allowing them to live their lives free of restrictions and with the freedom to pursue their own interests. Still, for other characters, some of the other kids' existence is in no sense. That is, they are both "restless" kids who have never done anything to please their mothers which cannot represent the main theme of love. Also, Leng, who plays the part of a gangster in the movie, can get along with Jia Xiaoling. It took some time to show how Jia and Leng interact with each other but there is no actual meaning to it. Many moviegoers who have seen the film have often left negative remarks about Leng, considering that he has no bearing on either the plot or the humorous effect. The audience then assumes it is unnecessary for him to exist. He has nothing to do with the parents' love neither shows symbols related to "mom". In conclusion, some of the roles are worth more consideration.

3.2 Unorganized Logic Throughout the Movie

Second, the logic in the plot is not reasonable enough. Despite the fact that it is not impossible, Jia Xiaoling's father is barely mentioned in this movie. The filmmaker handled it poorly, which also resulted in some illogical reasoning. Since Xiaoling's father has been the other component of their relationship for three years with Li Huanying, Li should comprehend the meaning of her daughter's wishes when Shen Guanglin is clearly asking for matchmaking with her and reject him directly without giving them any hope. Moreover, men and women at that time had a traditional connection. Even if Li Huanying was secretly in love with Jia Xiaoling's father, she ought to at least be upfront about it. This relates to the improper character sets as well. Li Huanying actually lacks her own emotional line, but Jia Xiaoling has one more with Leng and one less with her father.

No matter what the director decides, it should be portrayed at least in a secondary fashion because Jia Xiaoling's choice to alter his mother's destiny impacts both his father and herself. There were no emotional entanglements, which may have developed the characters, provided dramatic tension, and made sense.

3.3 Conservative Scope

The way and scope of the film's promotion are a little too conservative. Excessive hype affects domestic films seeking big box office numbers. From the planning stage to the film's release, intense marketing communication created a variety of news events, hot subjects, and other things to catch the audience's attention for some movies under the banner of huge investment, big director, and big star [6]. The initial stage of this type of concentrated large-scale marketing communication film is to entice the audience and get them into the theater. The disappointment will be worse after the movie if the narrative is hackneyed. The tale is subpar. The post-viewing experience is terrible. This is because there were high expectations before the movie even started. Many Chinese films attach importance to the commerciality of films but ignore the artistic and humanistic connotations of films.

Film derivatives refer to the products derived from the constituent elements of the film itself, including film-related documentaries, book posters, pictures and comics, theme songs, etc., or props, souvenirs, and video games related to the plot of the film. In addition, it also includes film patch advertising, product placement and tourism products in theme parks and film shooting places. At present, the shortcomings of the marketing communication of the film derivatives are mainly reflected in the following aspects: first, the film is weak in the marketing communication of the derivatives; Second, derivatives are not developed enough and copyright awareness is insufficient.

It is evident that there has to be more international marketing communication. Currently, marketing communication on social media is focused on the domestic market. It is challenging for its effect to transcend to other nations. One reason is that international markets are ignored and lack relevant activities. Another is that social media marketing communication has not developed. *Hi Mom* is only available in a few Asian countries, indicating that although the box office is very high, it is subject to certain limitations.

4. Suggestions

4.1 Film Distribution Scope and Publicity Channels

The mantra "content is king" improves the standard of content creation. The most crucial component of brief video communication is its content. The success of short video communication depends on the audience's understanding and accepting the content concept. Therefore, producing top-notch material is very crucial. The purpose of "Hello, Li Huanying" is to demonstrate how to "make the mother happier" in a mother-daughter relationship through humorous, compassionate, and delicate narrative tactics. The short video industry has grown quickly in recent years as a result of both internal and external pushing forces. While the internal driving force draws users' attention, the external environment supports large-scale development. However, as market rivalry continues to grow and development is sped up in the next years, issues with the short video development process will become more obvious and the short video platform will also go through a period of change. The major short video platforms must promptly acknowledge the issues, start reform efforts, and pay attention to the creation of short video content. To maintain an edge over the opposition, short videos can rely on their own resources and offline backup to build a "PGC (professional content production) + UGC (user content production)" way of content creation [7]. It can offer more plentiful information sources and material assistance for short video content development by setting up a professional user production team to mobilize users' passion for content production [8].

4.2 Emotion and Logic Coexist

"Emotion first" makes the audience experience real emotions. The use of "mixed emotional communication mode" to improve the effectiveness of communication, for example: the creation of short video content while maintaining the original narrative mode, adaptation to technological advancements, the emergence of mobile and social information transmission modes, and reinforcement of the emotional mode of content production. Short films are a fragmented visual depiction of reading that emphasize new communication benefits and gradually give rise to the "mixed emotion communication style" [9]. The primary characteristic of this method is that the story mode and information mode are the internal composition and information elements, while the emotional communication is the exterior drive and influence appeal. The process of using "mixed emotional communication mode" increase the effectiveness of communication by reducing the emotional gap between the communicator and the audience [10]. With the fast-pace development, future films can easily clarify the specific storyline and character line so that the whole film is more logical and closely connected.

4.3 Proper Ways to Monetize

Lastly, "Industrial operation" develops the concept of economic reciprocity. The advertising of the movie in the short video broadcast room has several economic repercussions, expands the profit model, and establishes a new ecological industrial chain in addition to increasing viewership for the movie. The major ways to profit from mobile short videos are through traffic and advertising. Advertising should be accurate in its delivery, decrease trash advertising, and encourage consumers to pay for it. Additionally, venues for short videos may alter how money is made. In the case of a single profit model, look into other profit models, create an entirely new profit model in conjunction with businesses, the media, and users, and support the wholesome growth of the short video industry. People will become visually fatigued from too much monotonous stuff, which will lower their appreciation of the movie as a whole.

5. Conclusion

The film is set in the frame of the narrative text with family as the main body, taking family as the core driving force of the narrative, acting on every character involved in the narrative link, showing the huge driving force generated by it as a narrative element in the film and television drama text creation, and further emphasizing the importance of the family as the main body in life. The development of domestic family films is improving steadily. The quality of films has significantly improved. The rapid development of domestic family-themed films does not, however, guarantee that all good films will be seen by the public, and only a select few family-themed films will succeed in the film industry, which is something that cinema and television professionals must also recognize. Therefore, those working in the film industry should actively research the best marketing plan for the growth of family-friendly films. The Chinese film industry is now thriving. The box office success of "Hi Mom" highlights the significance of marketing strategy in the production of moving images. The marketing strategy for this movie's success also serves as a point of reference for us in terms of thorough planning and coverage at every level. With a very diverse audience, humor is a popular film genre for the domestic consumer market. In light of how Chinese commercial films are made, producers should first focus on the creation of high-quality film content that will engage viewers on an emotional level and inspire them to watch movies. Second, the issue of how to grow the market must be resolved right now. Using Hi Mom as an example, publishing company can see that audience positioning, content management, platform choice, and word-of-mouth advertising are the fundamental elements that guarantee a movie's box office success. The Spring Festival film should adhere to the genre model of "emotional" + "comedy" + "family", which conforms to the market rules and meets the public expectations. The impact and significance of this study take this film is an example to study the impact of film distribution and publicity. The findings are helpful for those who

care about the genre to understand how it is distributed and how widely it can be distributed. There are still some factors not taken into account in this study: for example, the downloads and viewership of post-release platforms are different from those of other films of the same stage on different social media. Future research can carry out more in-depth research and consideration in this aspect.

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