

Research on the Impact of "Cuteness" Perception of anime Short Video on Customer Integration: Theoretical Analysis and Relationship Exploration

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Abstract

Anime short videos are increasingly important in enterprise marketing, but the impact mechanism of their "cuteness" perception on customer integration needs to be further studied. Based on the resource conservation theory and experiential integration marketing theory, this study deeply analyzes the relationship between the anime short video "cuteness" perception and customer integration, and discusses the role of positive emotions and quasi social relations in it. Research has found that the perception of "cuteness" has a positive impact on customer integration, with positive emotions and quasi social relationships acting as intermediaries and chain intermediaries, providing theoretical basis and practical guidance for enterprise marketing.

Keywords

Anime; Short videos; cuteness; Customer integration.

1. Introduction

Driven by the digital wave, the anime culture is booming. As a unique marketing medium, anime short video has received extensive attention from many industries. Many first-line brands have entered the anime cultural community station B to carry out anime short video marketing activities aimed at attracting young consumers. However, although the practical activities are in full swing, the academic research related to them is relatively scarce. In particular, there are still many unsolved mysteries about the impact mechanism of anime short video "Cuteness" perception on customer integration.

With its unique charm, anime culture covers animation, comics, games, light novels and other forms, forming a strong trend among young people. Anime short videos, with their vivid and creative features, have become a new bridge between enterprises and young consumers. Among them, the "cuteness" attribute, as one of the core features of the anime culture, is highly consistent with the young groups' pursuit of novelty and personalized aesthetic preferences, which makes anime short video marketing have a significant feature of experiential integration into marketing. However, at present, the internal logic of how the anime short video "cuteness" perception affects customer integration is not clear in the academic community, and this research gap needs to be filled.

The purpose of this study is to deeply explore the impact of "cuteness" perception of anime short video on customer integration, analyze its mechanism based on resource conservation theory and experiential integration marketing theory, provide strong theoretical support for enterprises' marketing practices in the anime field, and contribute new insights to relevant academic research.

2. Theoretical Basis

The Resource Conservation Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) emphasizes that individuals have an instinctive tendency to protect and accumulate resources, and the acquisition and accumulation of resources are crucial for their survival and development. In the context of anime short video marketing, "cuteness" perception may become a factor that triggers positive experience, thus affecting the construction and accumulation of individual resources. The "cuteness" element in the anime short video can attract the audience's attention, stimulate their interest and affection, and thus promote the audience to produce a series of positive behaviors, such as comments, sharing, creation, etc. These behaviors not only contribute resources to the marketing activities of the enterprise, but also enrich the audience's own experience and financial reserves.

The theory of integrating experiential customers into marketing (Harmeling et al., 2017) suggests that experiential events can change customers' beliefs and attitudes, stimulate positive emotions and cognitive engagement, and promote long-term customer integration. As a typical experiential event, the unique experience brought by the "cuteness" attribute of anime short video may trigger positive emotions of the audience, promote the formation of quasi social relations, and then guide customers to complete self transformation and finally achieve the goal of customer integration.

3. The mechanism of "cuteness" perception of anime short video on customer integration

The characters in the anime short videos mostly adopt the Japanese animation style of "big eyes, small mouth and flattening". The simplicity, exaggeration and purity of this shape will induce the audience's "immature" perception (Xu et al., 2019). According to the theory of extension construction of positive emotions, this perception of "cuteness" triggers the audience's love response, which in turn stimulates specific positive emotions such as interest, satisfaction, and joy (Fredrickson, 1998). Positive emotions can not only promote audience engagement or sustained action, but also expand their short-term thinking action reserve, affecting the construction of personal resources, including physical resources, intellectual resources, and social resources. For example, when watching the anime short video, the audience may feel the positive emotion brought by the "cute" element, and may be more willing to deeply understand the relevant brand or product information, participate in comments, sharing and other interactive behaviors, so as to increase their own intellectual resources (such as brand awareness) and social resources (such as interpersonal relationship expansion brought by social interaction).

When the audience has positive emotions due to "cuteness" perception, they will be more inclined to establish contact with anime characters. The "cuteness" attribute in anime short videos can trigger social interaction, bring cuteness objects into the moral circle, and stimulate the audience's empathy and sympathy (Sherman and Haidt, 2011; Xu et al., 2019). According to the interpersonal construction theory, the audience develops the awareness of "understanding" of the role by applying their own interpersonal construction system to the interaction with the anime role, and then establishes a quasi social relationship (Perse and Rubin, 1989). Different cuteness attributes can attract different audiences. When audiences have strong emotional reactions to anime roles, such as sense of autonomy, relevance and attachment, it will promote the formation of quasi social relations. For example, the audience may view a character with specific "cute" attributes as their friend or role model, pay attention to the relevant dynamics of the character, and even imitate the character's behavior or values, thus establishing a one-way, imaginative quasi social relationship.

The quasi social relationship between the audience and the anime role includes cognitive, emotional and behavioral components, which can improve the perceived proximity and relevance between the audience and the role (Klimmt et al., 2006). In order to meet social needs and gain a sense of belonging, young groups will stimulate a strong desire for return and maximize the consumption goal of relationship interests after establishing a quasi social relationship with anime roles (van Doorn et al., 2010). This desire for return encourages them to actively participate in customer engagement behaviors such as commenting, video sharing, consuming related products, and secondary creation. From the perspective of resource conservation theory, quasi social relationships belong to conditional resources. By participating in these customer integration behaviors, audiences not only contribute resources to enterprise marketing, but also accumulate new energy resources (such as the sense of achievement brought by creation) and conditional resources (such as social recognition) for themselves, thus entering the spiral of resource appreciation. For example, in order to express their love for anime characters, audiences may purchase products related to characters, produce and share secondary creative content related to characters. These behaviors not only increase the sales and brand influence of enterprises, but also enhance the audience's own position and sense of identity in the anime community.

"Cuteness" perception of anime short video can not only directly affect positive emotions and quasi social relations, but also promote the formation of quasi social relations through positive emotions, and then jointly act on customer integration, forming a chain intermediary role. From the perspective of cognitive psychology, customers' perception of core products is an interconnected network, and experiential integration programs can enhance and create new cognitive keys (Anderson, 1983). Anime short video "cuteness" perception can not only strengthen the cognitive keys related to brands or products, but also create cognitive keys related to anime roles, enriching customers' psychological representation. At the same time, the positive emotions triggered by the perception of "cuteness" can promote the formation of quasi social relationships, and the audience can complete self-transformation by investing in positive emotions and quasi social relationships, thereby promoting long-term customer integration. For example, when viewers watch anime short videos, the "cuteness" perception first triggers positive emotions, making them have a good impression on the role; This positive emotion prompts them to interact more deeply with their roles and establish quasi social relationships; With the deepening of quasi social relationships, the audience's cognition and emotional connection with the brand or product are further enhanced, ultimately prompting them to actively participate in customer integration behaviors, such as long-term attention to the brand, recommending to others, etc.

4. Practical Insights

Enterprises should fully realize the great potential of anime cultural communities (such as Station B) in attracting young consumer groups, actively enter these platforms and carry out anime short video marketing activities. Bilibili and other platforms provide a creative and interactive space for young people. Companies can use functions such as uploading links to encourage viewers to create, develop, and contribute unique ideas, thereby promoting customer integration. For example, companies can hold creative short video competitions to stimulate audience participation, increase brand awareness and customer stickiness.

When making anime short videos, enterprises should pay attention to strengthening the construction of the "cute" attribute of roles, and carefully design from the aspects of appearance, clothing, personality and identity to enhance the "cuteness" perception of young groups. For example, learn from the successful experience of L'Oreal men's linkage marketing through A-SOUL, a virtual idol group, and create a anime role image with distinctive personality and charm

according to the brand positioning and target audience, so as to attract the attention and love of the audience and promote customer integration.

Enterprises can use the quasi social relationship between young groups and anime roles in a variety of ways to strengthen marketing effects. For example, producing a series of themed short videos and placing them on different platforms to increase opportunities for viewers to interact with characters and strengthen quasi social relationships. By creating a anime image of "Ding San Duo" and launching a series of related videos, Dingding has attracted the attention and love of a large number of young users and promoted customer integration. In addition, enterprises can also create more ways to establish quasi social relations with the audience, meet the social needs of the audience, stimulate their desire for return, and improve customer integration by displaying anime roles in newspapers, magazines, animation exhibitions and other channels, making peripheral products, and anthropomorphic interaction on social platforms.

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