

Analysis of city brand marketing based on short-video social media (Douyin): A case study of Jinan city

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Abstract. The Internet has facilitated the diversification of media forms. With the advent of short video, anyone can participate in and disseminate city brand information, so using short video to show the charm of cities plays an important role in city brand marketing. Using Douyin and Jinan city as examples, this paper analyzes the importance of short videos in spreading Jinan tourism culture and suggests some factors to consider when developing a marketing strategy for a city brand.

Keywords: City Brand; Marketing; Social Media.

1. Introduction

The Internet has evolved into a very mature medium over the last few years, and new media such as short videos have had a large impact on traditional media (Ge et al., 2021). As information sources have become more diverse, audiences are no longer satisfied with traditional media and prefer the multi-faceted, more intuitive, three-dimensional presentations of information available in new media even when faced with fragmented information (Huangfu et al., 2022).

Using short video platforms such as Douyin for city brand marketing can be very advantageous. In this paper, I will examine how Douyin can aid city brand marketing. I will argue that using Douyin for city brand marketing can help drive local tourism growth and attract people to tourist cities. As a result, this can lead to the development of the city's economy as well as the dissemination of its culture.

2. Analysis of the Influence of Douyin on City Brand Marketing

With the help of the short video platform, Jinan, which is one of the most important historical and cultural cities in China, has been given the brand name of "City of Culture and Tourism". Due to the fast-paced changing of information in today's world, traditional cultural identification is no longer able to fully capture the charm of a city behind them, which is the reason that tourists tend to think only of symbolic landmarks when they mention Jinan and know little about other cultural resources (Sheng et al., 2019). There is a large number of tourists who travel to Jinan for the sole purpose of climbing Mount Thousand Buddhas, enjoying Daming Lake, and visiting Baotu, almost without having any idea of what else there is to explore. As soon as tourists have seen a few representative sites, they will be on their way to the next tour stop. Short video social networks, such as Douyin, have produced a lot of "shaping merchandise" in recent years as many users would like to share new things with their friends. There is no doubt that short videos play a significant role in bringing better awareness to tourists.

2.1 The Advantages of Short Video in Disseminating City Culture

First of all, short videos have a greater communicative effect than general videos, as opposed to general videos. Short videos are generally between five and ten minutes long, and watching them takes much less time (Larsen, 2018). There is no doubt that this is very appealing for modern people who have very busy lives. A short video production process differs substantially from other media forms in terms of its ease of use and simplicity of procedure, and everyone can be involved in the production process of a short video (Merrilees et al., 2009). In other words, short videos are designed to be viewed by a larger audience, and short videos are not only used for the dissemination of content, but also as a tool for social interaction.

Short videos are a powerful tool for presenting information to a wide audience. Short videos are not as formal as TV news, nor are they like traditional paper media that can only present text and pictures. In short videos, the audience has the opportunity to experience a multidimensional experience. Short videos are highly appealing since they are filmed with a smartphone and edited with special effects, filters, and music from a software program. The videos can be viewed, liked, and commented on in social networks. Social media platforms become more active when short videos are posted to them, which increases the number of users of short videos as well as the number of active users of social media networks.

Furthermore, the cost of producing a short video is quite low. A short video has a number of advantages over a long video, and more importantly, it fully utilizes the human senses of hearing and sight. This form of video is very effective at displaying information. This video consists of a short duration, but the information it conveys is expressed more intuitively by using a rich array of images, music, and a reasonable amount of text. In addition to overcoming the limitations of time and space, short videos are also more mobile, both in terms of time and space, which means this type of video can be viewed anywhere at any time. With this approach, the audience's fragmented needs are met in a creative and effective way.

2.2 The Promotion of Short Video for the Economic Development of a City

The dissemination of short videos has had a significant impact on the rapid establishment of a city image and brought huge economic benefits to the city. This is mainly reflected in three aspects: promoting city tourism, exporting city culture, and promoting overseas exchanges. A tourist spot named "Jinan Kuankhouli" which is widespread on Douyin, for instance, received about 380,000 visitors over a week-long holiday period. This has led to a number of potential partners, such as Xiamen's "Paomian Canteen", which has opened several branches in Jinan with a relatively low investment. Due to this, more locals have visited the restaurant, resulting in a profitable business at a low cost to the restaurant.

The use of short videos as part of cultural exhibitions is a great way to promote online as well as offline consumption of short videos. During the past few years, as the Chinese government has stepped up its efforts to develop the tertiary industry, the soft power of culture has become the core competitiveness of Chinese cities (Wang, 2020). An effective way to promote a city's cultural brand in a short amount of time is through short videos. On the short video platform, the symbolic carrier of city image is "BEST", i.e. BGM (Symbolic music), Eating, Scenery, and Technology. These four symbols could highlight many of the great city images. For example, local food was considered to be the easiest and most convenient way to understand the culture of a city. Users can post their local food features on media platforms and use food as a vehicle to showcase the local cuisine and drive more audiences to the local characteristics of the area. Furthermore, the short video era allows everyone to be involved in the publicity process, unlike the traditional way, where only the government and official media were involved in the publicity process (Du et al., 2020). Thus, citizens and tourists are uploading short videos with a clear local identity, and netizens click "like" on these contests online and attend them in person. Off-line tourism consumption is promoted by online content consumption, and online content production is in turn enhanced by off-line tourism consumption.

3. City Brand Marketing Strategy of Douyin

3.1 Precise Account Positioning to Create a Tourism Brand

A short video account, particularly one that publishes content primarily to promote the image of a tourist city, should combine the characteristics of that city, prepare a proper planning and design, clarify the positioning of that city, and create videos that correspond to that positioning. The creator of the account should therefore focus on more than just the tourism resources of the tourist city in

determining its positioning (Amelia et al., 2018), but on a deeper exploration of tourism culture and its spiritual connotation in order to develop a tourism brand that truly captures the essence of the city.

For instance, "Jinan Chi He Wan Le Tuan" is an account dedicated to Jinan food, with 1.466 million followers. To promote awareness of Jinan's food culture, the account offers occasional lucky draws to its followers. This account is intended to encourage people throughout China to fall in love with Jinan because of its cuisine. By developing a brand for Jinan tourism and food, the account has greatly increased awareness of Jinan's delights among potential consumers. It is important to note, however, that food is only one of the contents that are covered by tourism. Other items need to be separated into a number of categories, positioned precisely, and marketed in short videos. Short videos should be marketed in a way that reflects their shortness and compactness, incorporating fun and professionalism.

3.2 Improved Content Quality to Tell The City's Story

High-quality content is the core of a short video (Lu, 2019). To expand the user scale and generate traffic in a tourist city, short video content must convey the charm of the tourist city within 10 to 30 seconds and need to overcome the barrier of high concentrations and homogenizations of information sources (Yang & Ha, 2021). While Jinan is well known as the "Spring City", little is known about its history and its origin. Considering the history of Jinan and the urban landscape of Jinan, short video media must fully explore the connotation of Jinan, select the most representative and innovative stories, and distribute them vividly and accurately so that more people will be able to appreciate Jinan's history and feel its urban landscape. Take Douyin's account "Jinan Street Visit" for example, which was created in July 2018 and has grown to 3.106 million followers. Through random filming on the street, the account records the daily lifestyle of Jinan residents and presents the real picture of the city from the perspective of the locals. It has become popular among netizens due to its excellent content and simple and clear videos.

3.3 Launching Topic Challenges to Stimulate Nation-Wide Participation

Tourism cities should utilize marketing strategies that are based on the needs of their users, stimulate their participation, reinforce customer loyalty, and increase brand influence. In one sense, tourism enterprises can cooperate with short video platforms to launch a variety of challenges that are centered on tourism culture and city branding. Users of the platform can receive creative ideas from the platform and can be encouraged to record short videos in designated areas. The top users can be rewarded based on relevant data collected within a specified period of time. Douyin is also capable of screening out high-quality content for marketing and promotion. An activity of this type can enhance the enthusiasm of users, and strengthen the stickiness of fans, as well as improve the visibility and recognition of the tourist city. In addition, preliminary information gathering and field research are necessary to identify attractions and conduct marketing campaigns. Users may vote on the popularity of each attraction on the Douyin platform after the promotional videos have been released. In this way, the attraction that is unanimously recognized by the public can be selected out, thus meeting the needs of users.

4. Conclusion

China's tourism city image was communicated by the government prior to the emergence of social media. Although the official tourism videos have been exquisitely produced, they may not capture the point of interest of the public and may fall into the category of politicized propaganda. As opposed to this, the tourism videos that are viewed by users on social media platforms such as Douyin are primarily created by tourists themselves and are closer to the perspective of the general public. Videos uploaded by different users give the user a multidimensional view of the city, so he or she can gain a deeper understanding of the true nature of the tourist destination. Therefore, it is necessary for

Douyin's brand to be properly marketed online and offline to encourage users to become involved, as well as to boost the city's economic development.

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