



REVIEW

An Analysis of the Value and Strategies of Microblog Marketing

Junyan Du*

School of Management, Shandong University of Technology, Zibo, Shandong, 255000, China

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ABSTRACT

Microblog marketing is that the enterprise uses the platform of Sina microblog to carry out its own marketing activities. Every fan and even every netizen are potential business participants. With microblog marketing, the enterprise intends to create a good image for the company and products and achieve marketing goals by means of communicating with customers by updating daily content or publishing topics that may be of interest to customers.

1. Introduction

Microblog is a broadcast online social platform that relies on the interaction of users through comments and retransmission for information sharing and real-time communication. Any user can access it through mobile phones, personal computers, and other mobile terminals. In 2009, Sina microblog, a domestic portal, launched a Beta version of Sina microblog, which has since entered the world of mainstream netizens. With the rapid development of microblog and the public revelry, a lot of Internet buzzwords became popular, and had the effect of explosive spread, the network gradually formed the microblog effect.

As a product of the Internet, especially in the current era of dominant mobile phones, microblog has become a new model following portal, search, and other methods, which can obtain and share information anytime and

anywhere. The financial report of microblog for the third quarter of 2019 shows that the number of monthly active users of microblog in September 2019 was 497 million, a net increase of approximately 51 million compared with the same period last year. About 94% of the monthly active users are mobile users and created a net revenue of US \$ 467.8 million, an increase of 2% from US \$ 460.2 million in the same period last year^[1].

With the increasing number of active users of microblog and the rising profits of microblog, the marketing team of the enterprise also targeted this "feng shui treasure" and carried out the initial microblog marketing aiming at the functions and forms of microblog. VAN-CL, the earliest entry into Sina microblog, has attracted nearly 4,000 followers in the first month of its opening on microblog, each of which will attract a lot of new attention. The old netizen must be familiar with such events as "go up microblog, send a scarf" and "did you

*Corresponding Author:

Junyan Du,

School of Management, Shandong University of Technology, Zibo, Shandong, 255000, China;

E-mail: 2495364699@qq.com.

scarf today?": through a series of marketing means such as cooperating with relevant sina users to give the gift of a brand scarf, inviting celebrities such as Yao Chen and Xu Jinglei to interact with users on brand-related products, VANCL has made its enterprise microblog an important platform to promote its enterprise brand, narrow the distance and enhance the emotional bond between the enterprise and consumers. Under the influence of the successful marketing campaign of VANCL, more and more enterprises begin to settle into microblog and carry out microblog marketing activities.

2. Overview of Microblog Marketing

Microblog marketing refers to the behavior that enterprises and individuals use the interaction and communication function of microblog platform to achieve the purpose of commercial marketing by releasing product information and cultural propaganda targeted to the target fan groups. A common way is for companies to attract consumers by releasing new content to spread their values and popular products to users. In addition, we can create social currency to interact with consumers. For example, the main business of the company is selling cosmetics. We can write a short article about soft advertisements such as "do these five steps to make your skin smooth and bright" to achieve the purpose of marketing.

In the era of cultural diversity, microblog marketing integrates and extracts text, pictures, videos, and other materials by virtue of diversified presentation forms of microblog, so that consumers can receive more intuitive and comprehensive information. Such diversified forms of presentation can stimulate potential consumers in multiple ways and achieve better marketing effect of enterprise microblog^[2]. Secondly, the transmission of microblog information has increased geometric effect. Enterprises can serve themselves with star effect and social hot topics, or interact with stars on the platform in the form of "@", "forward" and "comment" to improve exposure and share with fans and friends. In addition, microblog marketing is better than the traditional advertising industry. The main body of microblog messages does not have to go through complicated administrative examination and approval, which saves most of the material and financial resources. However, due to its wide coverage of information dissemination, it saves costs for enterprises and establishes a more natural and healthy public communication image. From the process of enterprises' microblog marketing, we can find that microblog marketing can weaken the antagonistic relationship between marketing subjects to a certain extent, so that enterprises can conduct marketing activities with a listening attitude closer to consumers^[3].

3. Analysis of the Value of Microblog Marketing

3.1 It Is Conducive to Corporate Brand Communication

Microblog avatar, ID, signature, background wall and content output can intuitively reflect the corporate image and culture. It can strengthen netizens' familiarity and recognition of the brand, shorten the distance with consumers, and build brand loyalty^[4]. For example, on the official microblog of Coca-Cola company, its own big red LOGO is used in the profile picture to highlight the brand; the images of the current main spokespersons appear as the background to attract their fans; The content of microblog is mainly interactive and intended to arouse the enthusiasm of fans.

3.2 It Can Help Enterprises to Promote Their Products

The slogan of microblog is "find something new anytime, anywhere". Where there is something new, there will be public attention, and where there is attention, there will be advertising. Therefore, there will be a certain amount of advertising on microblog. It's free to sign up for a corporate account and post videos or text content, but it's a very effective way to increase your brand's exposure. However, enterprises must pay attention to the advertisements when they publish micro blogs. Otherwise, users will lose interest and shift away their attention, which should be a great loss for enterprises, because everyone who follows micro blogs may be potential consumers^[5].

3.3 It Makes It Possible for Enterprises to Carry out Integrated Marketing

Enterprises can carry out combined marketing by synchronizing marketing plans of online and offline channels by taking into consideration their specific product selling points or activity contents and designing reasonable channel combination strategies that meet their own needs and highlight their own characteristics.

3.4 It Enables Enterprises to Carry out Public Relations

Microblog's interactivity and openness are very conducive to the daily customer maintenance of enterprises. Enterprises can release and update their daily content every day and conduct continuous interaction with fans. By creating an anthropomorphic image, they can continuously attract fans and increase their loyalty, thus increasing the brand

loyalty of customers. At the same time, in daily interaction, many customer feedbacks can be collected to facilitate targeted optimization and adjustment.

Not long ago, Kris Wu, a male star who is prone to negative comments from netizens, did a good job in public relations with a microblog to successfully attract passers-by to worship and make such a exclaim that Wu Yifan gave CAI Xukun a valuable lesson in handling public relations. As we all know, in this era of entertainment to death, when stars entertain people, they also are hard to avoid entertainment. Actor Kris Wu not only has been among hot topics for a long time due to one of his freestyle lyrics without high quality, but also caused the netizens' craze for pouring negative comment and poking fun at him. Fortunately, his public relations team has a keen sense for microblog users' entertainment mood. With a microblog to tease Kris Wu and entertain the public, the team successfully reversed the story and won netizens' approval of Kris.

4. Analysis of the Strategies of Microblog Marketing

4.1 Clear Objectives, Full Participation, And Long-Term Operation

Many companies just blindly follow suit and set up microblogs. However, due to the lack of management, unclear goals, no planning and other reasons, they easily give up after a period without finding the effect. Therefore, enterprises must realize that using microblog for marketing is not a random and accidental behavior, it is a systematic engineering.

Successful microblog marketing requires clear objectives, scientific planning, solid marketing activities as the basis, persistence and sustainable post-maintenance. More staff participation can be involved and microblog marketing team should be established. through microblog valuable information should be continually provided and updated in time. Meanwhile, strengthen the interaction with netizens should be strengthened and proceeded so as to gradually improve microblog influence, appeal and accumulate fans, keep fans and convert them to users^[6].

4.2 Abundant Information, Innovative Activities, Persistent Attention from Potential Customers

Attracting enough attention from potential consumers is the foundation of successful microblog marketing. Corporate microblogs struggle to get people's attention quickly and gain many fans like celebrities. Therefore, how an en-

terprise can create a microblog that people like to browse and patronize repeatedly is a very important issue.

China Merchants Bank's approach is worth learning from. China Merchants Bank uses microblog as a consultation platform for financial wealth management and information. As a marketing brand for financial products and services, it publishes 10-12 specific microblog messages in a fixed period through a fixed microblog section every day. Three of them are information about financial management knowledge. In the enterprise microblog, there will be a lot of promotion activities related to business, or online activity information organized around financial products. At the same time, it can also organize and summarize online network resources through microblog live broadcast, fan contact and other flexible ways^[7]. In 2010, China Merchants Bank launched a new financial platform "Love Wealth Management". For example, the microblog holds various activities from time to time, such as "seckill", "love him on valentine's day" and "love money". China Merchants Bank turns microblog into not only a window for official news and advertising, but also a platform to provide valuable information to potential consumers.

4.3 Combination with Blog, Complementation with Blog

Microblog itself belongs to the form of blog. Compared with blog, microblog can release information more conveniently and quickly. The information terminal is more diversified, the operation is simpler, the information dissemination is faster and the interaction is stronger. The advantages of microblog make it quickly become a marketing platform valued by enterprises. However, due to the capacity of only 140 characters, the content of microblog is simple, and the information tends to be scattered, and it is difficult to fully express the content and viewpoints to be transmitted.

Relatively speaking, blog does not have text capacity limit and is able to provide system information needed; as a result, it enables the company to supply product information accurately so that customers can have a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the company, and the features and functions of products. The in-depth research of blog in a certain field and the communication with users in many aspects also provide an effective way to obtain users' brand recognition and loyalty. Microblog has its own advantages. Microblog can extract the most important part of the blog, provide it to the user, arouse the user's interest, and attach the url of the blog, so that the user can more quickly enter the blog to read the whole article to learn more information. Therefore, blog and mi-

croblog can complement each other and be combined to improve the effect of microblog marketing^[8].

4.4 Cooperation with KOL

KOL refers to a Key Opinion Leader, or an online "activist." They often influence others by providing information, opinions, and comments in interpersonal communication. They can be classified according to the following conditions: whether they have a right to speak in life, whether they add V to their opinions, their fields of opinion (politics, business, entertainment, leisure, etc.) and their different nature (media, government, enterprises, celebrities, general public, etc.). On the Internet, KOL can play a better role than in the traditional environment. Enterprises should pay attention to the influence of microblog KOL, give full play to the appeal of microblog opinion leaders, make more target consumers accept the information that enterprises convey in an active and positive way, and improve the effectiveness of microblog marketing^[9].

5. Implications and Suggestions of Microblog Marketing

5.1 Enhance the Publicity of Corporate Image

In the specific microblog marketing process, the first thing to establish a good image is to win the goodwill of microblog users towards enterprises. Take Durex for example. Durex's microblog can be roughly divided into the following categories: hot topics, holiday wishes, celebrity entertainment, knowledge popularization and so on. If it is close to the people's livelihood, any item can be transformed into a humorous and unique copy. Durex's microblog is mainly used for brand image and promotion, linked to its service platform and e-commerce platforms such as Tmall and Jingdong Mall. Its microblog content attaches great importance to originality, which helps to set up an excellent brand image. According to its own product characteristics, Durex builds its official microblog into a well-cultivated, humorous, and skillful joke master, with a relaxed and funny way to spread popular knowledge. Associating its microblog content with hot spots and transforming them into their own copies, Durex makes sure that its microblog meets internet users' need for high-quality content, and adapts well to the changes of the current era, displaying its high sensitivity to the change in marketing methods. In addition, Durex's official microblog is frequently updated and interactive, which is the most important reason for its wide recognition by the public.

5.2 Play the Star Effect and Improve the Forwarding Rate

With the rapid development of microblog, stars and web celebrities will be more willing and more inclined to interact with fans on microblog. Naturally, more enterprises choose to cooperate with these high-traffic stars who's been enjoying popularity on microblog over five years to advertise for themselves.

These "microblog celebrities" evaluate the enterprise brand through one or two microblog comments, which can have a great impact on the image value and product value of the enterprise, and the marketing effect is remarkable. Such a new marketing method that creates value for businesses through well-known microblog platforms and famous microblog characters are referred to as star effect.

Hu Ge, a male star well reputed for his wonderful image and temperament, recently has been endorsing the phone—Huawei Glory series. In the product release of the Glory series, Hu Ge presented himself at the release and as a result, the venue was full of people, many whom went there for Hu Ge and bought the mobile phone because he is the endorser. On another occasion, Hu Ge met his fans in a mall, who then eagerly asked for his autograph; but Hu Ge agreed to give autograph only to those who use the mobile phone series endorsed by him. This is the power of stars; star effect is incredible.

5.3 Win Approval from KOL And Create Attraction

KOL is regarded as a relatively new marketing tool, which has exerted the advantages of social media in terms of coverage and influence, and has a strong fan loyalty. The top KOL is composed of celebrities from all walks of life, and its marketing is mainly realized through endorsement, promotion for events and so on. The vertical KOL mainly refers to "we media" with many fans and professional influence, and its marketability forms are relatively flexible and diverse. The last type of KOL refers to professional experts and active brand fans, who are between ordinary people and big V, have a certain communication power and amount to a large number, and can communicate with consumers on an equal basis.

In order to make the enterprise information stand out from the thousands of micro blog messages, we must make every effort to win the approval of the industry opinion leaders, and attract the attention of fans with the influence of such leaders. Leaders whose opinions are influential are regarded as the industry monitors. In some industries, the attitude and evaluation of these industry opinion leaders are particularly important for such indus-

tries as food, beauty makeup, parenthood, tourism, etc. Enterprises should guide industry opinion leaders to give active and positive evaluation of enterprises, and then quickly spread the favorable news among potential customer groups to improve their popularity.

5.4 Pay Constant Attention to Current Hot Topics and Seize the Opportunity

Microblog is a huge information base. If enterprises pay more attention to the hot economic news, they can get inspiration and find business opportunities. Durex, for example, has achieved great success with its creative copywriting. But this success is no accident. Durex analyzes the hot topics every day, extracts the most critical content, and then makes a smart connection with its own products or brand culture. Turn the product pitch into a copywriting format that is more acceptable to users. None of Durex's posts are straightforward. His posts are like a brain teaser that requires us to ponder and speculate. In this way, the fans interact with each other, and the fans who are interested in the interaction will share the topic with other friends. At the same time, this also stimulates the curiosity of netizens and attracts them to the copies that follow, thus increasing user viscosity.

5.5 Handle properly Negative Information and Make Backup Plans for Crisis in Public Relations

Due to the influence and dissemination power of microblog, more and more enterprises have their own official microblog. Through microblog platform, they can carry out a series of activities such as new product promotion, corporate image maintenance, and interaction with consumers, to better serve enterprises. Microblog is like a double-edged sword, with both advantages and disadvantages. Its viral-like marketing uses the internet users' interpersonal network and enthusiasm for participation to spread information like a virus, thus bringing benefits to enterprises more quickly. However, there are always two sides to everything, so enterprises should be careful in the use of microblog, when the crisis occurs, skillfully use microblog to resolve the crisis.

Compared with traditional public relations, microblog ACTS like a megaphone, spreading and amplifying the exposed information and escalating the influence of the event step by step once a message is exposed.

In 2012, at CCTV's "March 15" gala problems with McDonald's chain restaurant in Sanlitun, Beijing and Carrefour's illegal operation were revealed. According to statistics, 80% of microblog users support McDonald's, while Carrefour has been attacked by netizens, Similar

problems with food, different treatment. The reason is that McDonald's handled the crisis properly. After the problem was exposed, McDonald's apologized on its microblog within one hour. It responded quickly and made an immediate response.

Why did consumers give McDonald's their support? This is due to McDonald's great ability to deal with public relations with its microblog.

Because McDonald's often USES microblog to subtly influence consumers, so as to spread product advantages, brand concepts, corporate image, such as the launch of environmental products, playing the family card to cause nostalgia, constantly emphasize the quality of a series of promotional activities, consumers have a sense of trust in McDonald's. After the "March 15" party, McDonald's decisively turned to microblog, issued an apology statement, and after the outbreak of the crisis, McDonald's is the first enterprise to close business for inspection by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Such a series of actions showed the effectiveness of McDonald's microblog public relations and its prompt response to the crisis. This is the charm of good microblog public relations.

Therefore, enterprises should always pay attention to every microblog message, do a good job in predicting the development of events, and establish an information early warning mechanism. React to the negative information immediately, form the plan and take measures. When explaining negative news on microblog, be honest. The explanation posted on microblog must be rational and objective so that fans can understand and accept it. Otherwise, the fans' blind misbelief and dissemination of negative information will be aggravated, which will bring irreparable losses to the corporate reputation.

6. Conclusion

The emergence of microblog has indeed made a great contribution to the development of enterprise marketing. Its development enables enterprises and their products to come in close contact with users, bringing more attention and even potential customers to enterprises. However, every coin has two sides. Only by using microblog marketing correctly can an enterprise better achieve its marketing goals and truly create value for the enterprise. With the development of science and technology and the progress of economy, the Internet has become an indispensable part of our life, and microblog marketing has also become an important weapon for enterprise in marketing. If an enterprise attaches importance to the planning and promotion on microblog and optimizes its marketing plan, it can pave the way to success for each enterprise.

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