

## On the Application of Viral Marketing in Book Industry Cluster

Yanni Li <sup>1</sup>, Dafan Mu <sup>1</sup>, Jiayin Li <sup>2</sup>, Pengfei Shao <sup>1</sup> and Yanling Tang <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Foreign Languages, Changchun Institute of Technology, No.395 Kuanping Road, Changchun 130012, China

<sup>2</sup>School of Communication, Jilin Animation Institute, No. 168 Boshi Road, Changchun 130012, China

**Abstract.** Because of its high efficiency of information transmission and low cost, viral marketing is favored by numerous enterprises. Since the policy of reform and opening up took place in China, book marketing has been gradually appreciated by publishing industry. However, only few people have conducted research on the use of viral marketing and its adaptability in book-sale industry. Under the guidance of viral marketing theory, this paper puts forward some suggestions on the application of this theory to book-sale industry and proves its feasibility through the analysis of some successful cases in other field. The purpose is to promote the quality of book marketing and enrich people's spiritual life in such an information era.

**Keywords:** Viral marketing; information transmission; industry cluster; book market.

### 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of Internet technology, Internet has played an important role in social and economic life. It has not only opened up a kind of new marketing channel, but also influenced the marketing model fundamentally, by creating some unique network marketing methods. One of these marketing strategies is viral marketing. It is the development of word of mouth marketing by using modern technology. Compared with traditional word of mouth marketing, viral marketing owns a faster propagating speed. It is designed to attract network users ingeniously and impel them to spread information voluntarily. With the development of this new marketing strategy, more and more enterprises take this opportunity to advertise their products and get huge gains.

At present, viral marketing is a hot researching point. The concept of viral marketing was put forward in 1997. During more than ten years, the research has achieved a lot. Ralphf. Wilson, a famous American electronic business consultant, considers that viral marketing is a kind of marketing strategy. It encourages customers to spread information to others, and creates potential increasing motivation because of the information exposure and influence. Another American expert, Silverman.G thinks that it is a kind of word of mouth marketing. And the first article that introduced viral marketing in China is *The Six Basic Elements of Viral Network Marketing* which was translated in February 2000 by Feng Yingjian, the founder of the website, Marketing Man. That the first time the concept of viral marketing was introduced to China is in his book, *The Practice and Foundation of Network*. Although the research of viral marketing starts later, it has attracted wide attentions from different areas.

Although this new marketing strategy is widely used by different areas, problems still exist in some industries, especially in book-sale industry. It can be discovered that a mass of books are overstocked in bookstores and information of books cannot be spread effectively, so can these problems be worked out by using this new marketing strategy.

### 2. Research on book industry cluster in China

It is knowledge-based economy in the 21st century. Knowledge becomes one of the most important factors that decide people's survival and development. At the same time, along with the growth of national economy, people are also gradually enhancing to the pursuits of knowledge and spiritual life .

As book is the main way that people obtain knowledge, relative to the huge reader groups, China has great potential in book market, so it naturally becomes a prosperous enterprise.

There is no accurate record about when books first appeared in China, but it is certain that it has a long history. However, the book marketing just started after the reform and opening up.

From 1979 to 1985, book marketing was in its infancy. The variety and quantity of books were far from meeting the demand of readers because of the influence of planned economy system. Regarding XinHua bookstore as principle, it almost monopolized the whole book-sale market at that time. Readers' acquisition range and leeway were directly determined by books' topics and writing tendency in this period.

From 1986 to 1996, the supply and demand of books was relatively balanced in China. Along with the development of China's economic system, book marketing was developing continuously which resulted from book publishing industry cluster growing stronger and stronger. The control of book information transferred from publishers to bookstore dealers. Readers carried on their purchasing behaviors according to the published books and the best-sellers. Although the exchanges between readers and press and dealers increased, it is dealers that played an important role in the development of book market.

From 1997 to 2008, nearly 10 years, book market showed an oversupply situation because book publishing industry cluster was developing fast. First, the amount and types of books greatly increased year by year. Readers could choose any books that he or she needed. Second, book market tended to publish and sell books according to readers' favors. Therefore, the press and book dealers gradually came to realize the importance of readers and market. Thus the marketing concept which centers on readers gradually became the main idea of book marketing. Moreover, the rapid popularization and application of Internet forces book-sale industry to promote the implementation of network marketing strategy in order to follow the pace of the new age. (WANG, 2010)

Meanwhile, since 1990's, a large number of non-government operated bookstores (NGOB) have been very active. After entering the new century, with a series of brand establishment coming into being, large brands' products emerge and bulk copyrights are introduced. According to a rough statistics, NGOB has about 10 thousand retail institutions and hundreds of private planning organizations. The sales that NGOB creates take up 50% of the general book market of China. NGOB also solves the employment problem of about 1 million people concerning book industry and its relative service industry. China's NGOB makes great contributions to book market.

However, although book marketing has made great achievements in China, there are still many factors restricting China's book-sale industry which make book marketing face serious challenges.

First, the publicizing model is aging. The current book publicity gets used to body circulation. Publicity and readers cannot be linked and coordinated well. The press generally advertises for new books, which mostly plays a role of "new books publication notices" and does not regard publicity as books marketing tool. In addition, the inaccurate publicity positioning is also an important reason. The press rarely study and plan the selections of media and the accepting groups, such as middlemen, retailers and readers. And the publicity technique is also traditional that falls behind the contemporary information society.

Second, the organization of publishing house is inadequate. The organizational structure consists of three departments---editorial board, production department and issued department. It is set based on the publishing process rather than around the operation of book market. Book presses often lack an overall plan for the book market which makes the information of books flow poorly. Meanwhile, due to publication and issuance are divided, it is hard to understand the target market of books.

Third, few book sale organizations establish full-time market information department. Even if established, the full-time market information department has two big problems. One is that the management department does not pay enough attention to it, just regarding it as a department which can provide relevant information, and not really realize that information collection and handling may become productive forces. The other is the lack of qualified information personnel of book market and reasonable fund allocation. Thus, the information feedback cannot be carried on smoothly.

Due to the factors which restrict China's book sale and valid propaganda, information of books cannot spread effectively and many books are overstocked. By making use of network platform and applying viral marketing strategy, these problems can be solved.

### 3. Findings about viral marketing

It is necessary to fully explain the meaning, the basic principles and the features of viral marketing, because it is not only the foundation that studies the book marketing, but also the foundation that carries out viral marketing strategy.

The origin of viral marketing. The idea of viral marketing originates from 4Cs theory. 4Cs theory was put forward in 1990 by Professor Lauterborn, an American marketing expert. It takes consumers' need as guidance and redefines the four essential elements of marketing, i.e. Consumer, Cost Convenience and Communication. It stresses that enterprises should put customers' satisfaction in the first place, followed by trying to reduce the customers' purchase cost, and then should be fully aware of the convenience during purchase rather than decide sales channel strategy from the point of view of the enterprise, and finally should implement effective marketing communication which centers on consumers. 4Cs theory values customer orientation, and aims at customers' satisfaction. In fact, it is an inevitable requirement as consumers play a more and more active role in the marketing. Along with the development of network economy, viral marketing appeared on the basis of 4Cs marketing theory (Rosalind Masterson et al, 2006). And the concept of it was defined one after another once it appeared.

The concept of viral marketing. The concept of viral marketing that first appeared in 1997, was primarily defined as network—enhanced word of mouth. At present, scholars don't give a unified definition of viral marketing. But generally speaking, viral marketing is a common method of marketing which uses preexisting social networks to produce increases in brand awareness, through self-replicating viral processes, analogous to the spread of pathological and computer viruses. It can be word-of-mouth delivered or enhanced by the network effects of the Internet. The core word of viral marketing is “marketing” and without any relationship with virus, the word “viral” just describes the transmission mode of marketing information (Chang, 2006). Consumers acquire and spread information to others, just as cold viruses transmit between people. It is often used in a website promotion, brand promotion, etc. Viral marketing makes use of the principle of word of mouth (Silverman, 2004). With the help of Internet, this “word-of-mouth spread” is more convenient. Information can spread quickly like virus. Thus viral marketing becomes an effective way of information transmission. Viral marketing can be regarded as both a method and an idea of network marketing, that is, make use of active spread between audience to achieve the purpose of network marketing information transmission by providing audiences with valuable information and services.

Based on 4Cs marketing theory, the core of viral marketing is to enter consumers' hearts and make consumers disseminator of “virus” spontaneously. The strategy and method of viral marketing get involved the world of consumers from a new point of view. The foundation of the whole concept is to develop products according to the demand of consumers. Meanwhile, attract consumers to buy the products with the form of the virus spread. The power of viral marketing lies in the communication between customers. This interactive communication which is from their own perspective makes it easy to walk into customers' world. Then one consumers influence the others just as the viruses spread. Thus, the sale of products is effectively promoted (Gu and Wang, 2003). This marketing idea that centers on consumers is consistent with 4Cs marketing theory.

The features of viral marketing. Viral marketing makes information spread like viruses by using the audience's enthusiasm and interpersonal network. Marketing information is quickly copied and transmitted to millions of audience. There are three features which are different from other marketing ways (Zhu, 2006).

First, it has an attractive “pathogens”. Target consumers cannot get profit from businessmen for conveying information freely. But why do they provide transmission channels voluntarily? The

reason is that the information which the first disseminator transfers to the target group is not naked advertising information, but the attractive product and brand information after being processed. It is the beautiful jacket which is put on the advertising information that breaks through the alert mentality of consumers. Thus consumers change from pure audience to positive disseminator (Bunnell and Luecke, 2001).

Second, it has a geometric spread speed. Viral marketing is an information promotion which is spontaneous and expansionary. Product and brand information was passed to the individuals who have some connection with the consumers through a channel which is similar to interpersonal communication and group communication. For example, when a target audience read an interesting flash, his first reaction is probable to send the flash to his friends and colleagues. Therefore, the "forwarding army" constitutes the majority of geometric spread.

Third, its information can be received efficiently. There are some insuperable defects by using mass media to advertise, such as intense interference of information, complex receiving environment and serious alert psychology of audience. However, for those lovely "viruses", audiences receive them from their familiar people or search them actively. So they naturally have a positive attitude to accept those information. And the receiving channel is also relatively personal, such as SMS, email, etc.

All these make viral marketing overcome the noise impact as much as possible during information transmission and enhance the communication effect.

The general rules of viral marketing. To achieve success, in addition to recognize the basic idea of viral marketing, the general rules of it should also be further understood. Thus a successful viral marketing scheme can be designed.

First, "virus" has a certain boundary. Beyond the boundary, it will become real virus. No one likes his/her own computer being infected virus. Viral marketing itself is not virus and it can also benefit disseminators and implementer. In the actual operation of viral marketing, if operator does not realize the basic point that the essence of viral marketing is to provide free information and services for consumers, sometimes they may really spread virus.

Second, viral marketing cannot be successful without six basic elements (Wilson, 2000).

1. Give away valuable products or services.
2. Provide for effortless transfer to others.
3. Scale easily from small to very large.
4. Exploit common motivations and behaviors.
5. Utilize existing communication networks.
6. Take advantage of others' resources.

Third, network marketing information cannot be spread automatically and needs promotion of professionals. Viral marketing information won't achieve automatic transmission. It needs to resort to some certain external resources and existing communication environment. This promotion may not need direct costs, but need to select and use the effective network.

#### **4. Case analysis**

In recent years, viral marketing strategy has been used successfully by both foreign countries and China. It brings enterprises huge profits and even make some of them famous overnight.

Cases in foreign countries. The concept of viral marketing was initially inspired by a form of self-promotion which Hotmail Company adopted in 1996. And later it was used by Obo Stockhausen aquarium which brought it great success.

Case 1. Hotmail.com. Hotmail, the largest E-mail service provider in the world, attracted 12 million registers in one and half years after its establishment. And over 15 million users registered it every day. Incredibly, Hotmail only spent a few marketing costs within 12 months, less than 3% of its direct competitors (Feng, 2004). They took advantage of viral marketing strategy.

At that time, viral marketing strategy that Hotmail used was controversial. In order to promote its e-mail, Hotmail would enclose "P.S get your free Email at <http://www.hotmail.com>." at the end of the mail. When seeing the information, receivers would continually send messages to their friends and colleagues by using the free email. Thus the information that hotmail provided free mail spread widely. Because the additional information may affect users' personal emails, Hotmail removed "P.S" and the text with advertising significance later. But receivers could still tell that the senders were users of hotmail. Therefore, every user became a promoter naturally. This is the classic case of viral marketing.

Case 2. Magic "octopus emperor" Paul. Another successful case is Obo Stockhausen aquarium of Germany. When World Cup was near its end, the performances of several super stars, such as Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and Kaka, etc. were just passable. But Paul, a German octopus, seemed more remarkable than those stars. Chinese net citizens playfully called it "octopus elder brother". With the predictive power of magic, Paul could successfully predict winners and losers. Thus it became the darling of the media and received worldwide attention. The "octopus activity" which was about game prediction was on live in the official website of Obo Stockhausen aquarium. The result was that the excessive flow caused the meltdown of the Internet. Global net citizens quickly knew the octopus due to the reprint of the video. That whether the magic of the octopus was exaggerated is not known, but the influence of it has spread all over the world surely. Because Paul's reputation is too big, many sellers on Taobao use its name on their commodity and unexpectedly the sales was greatly promoted.

Even so, there is no doubt that the biggest winner is Obo Stockhausen aquarium which successfully launched the octopus star. The small aquarium leaped from an anonymous organization to a famous one. They first took advantage of the hottest World Cup to make a video on their website and provided a creative activity - octopus predicts World Cup. Because people paid close attention to the World Cup, thus the video was easily spread. And the content of the video attracted watchers' interest which made it spread from their own website to a large scale. Then the effect of viral marketing appeared. With the video spread, they successfully made information of the aquarium spread from a small scale to a large one. Meanwhile, public enthusiasm and existing communications network, such as blogs and forum, etc., greatly contributed to the rapid and wide spread.

#### Cases in China

In China, viral marketing is widely used in various industries. Many domestic enterprises have adopted some creative viral marketing strategies, such as free services, e-books and greeting cards, etc.

#### Case 1. Kingsoft Antivirus

Kingsoft Antivirus is undoubtedly one of the classic cases of viral marketing in domestic antivirus software industries. It first provided trial version. Users could download and reprint it freely. The trial version would regularly notify users to upgrade the version or purchase official one. Trial users carried on their interpersonal communication while reprint sites were also doing network transmission. This would allow more people to know Kingsoft Antivirus. Thus more users would use the free trial version of it. And its brand information would spread in wider areas. Kingsoft Antivirus received two obvious effects after the process operated repeatedly. One was that the brand awareness greatly improved. The other was that a lot of consumers were accustomed to using the products. When the trial consumers have been formed and accustomed to using Kingsoft Antivirus (trial version), its formal version was released. With its low price, consumers naturally chose it. So Kingsoft Antivirus became the first brand of the domestic antivirus software.

#### Case 2. Coca-Cola

On March 24 in 2008, Coca-Cola Company launched a torch relay online. If someone got the qualification for the torch relay online, he would win the title of "torch ambassador", and an unlit icon would appear at his QQ head picture. After that, he could send invitation to his friends. If he could successfully invite other users to participate in the activity within 10 minutes, his icon would be lit. At the same time, he would receive the exclusive right to use QQ skin of Coca-Cola torch relay online. And his friend could continually invite the next one to participate in the activity, and so on. Net

citizens were proud of being torchbearers so that this activity appealed 40 million (41169237) people in just 40 days. Thus the viral chain reaction was out of control which effectively advertised the products of Coca-Cola Company.

### Case 3. Learning Baking from JunZhi

The strategy of viral marketing is successfully used in this book. JunZi is the blogger of food in Sina blog channel. His baking articles are very popular. Thus his blog entries are usually reprinted. So when his book *Learning Baking from JunZhi* was published, it became a best-seller. Before the book came into the market, the advance selling information was sent which greatly aroused readers' purchasing desire. At the same time, JunZhi wrote the purchase link of DangDang net on his blog. By using viral marketing strategy, the purchase link was clicked frequently and the sale of this book was greatly improved. *Learning Baking from JunZhi* became the best seller on DangDang net.

Through the above cases, it is believed that viral marketing strategies are successfully applied. Businesses make the most of the six basic principles of viral marketing. First, they provide valuable and free products or services. "Free" is the most powerful word in a marketer's vocabulary. Most viral marketing programs give away valuable products or services to attract attention. Free e-mail services, free information and free software programs, etc can perform powerful functions. Users can get benefits or pleasure from them. Second, the way of information dissemination is convenient for users to implement. It doesn't need users to spend energy, or just clicking the mouse can do. Like Hotmail Company, *Learning Baking from JunZhi*, the way is just an address link. Third, clever viral marketing plans take advantage of common human motivations. A successful viral marketing strategy largely depends on public enthusiasm and existing communication network. It can be seen that businesses just offer attractive "pathogens", but the information of the above cases are spread automatically between people. In fact, others' resources are also used virtually in the information transmission.

## 5. Result and discussion

The Five Steps of Successful Implementation of Viral Network Marketing by Dr. Fengjianying describes that viral network marketing is a kind of network marketing method, i.e. through providing valuable information and services and making use of the active spread between users to realize the aim of network marketing information transmission; viral network marketing is also a network marketing idea. And its meaning behind is how to make full use of external network resources (especially free resources) to expand transmission channels of network marketing information. This argument fully expresses that the basic idea of viral network marketing is the guiding principles of formulating and implementing the viral network marketing plan. (Gu and Wang, 2003)

Feasibility of implementing viral marketing. Whether viral marketing can be used in book industry cluster, it depends on whether this marketing mode is suitable for book-sale industry and whether book is "poisonous".

Firstly, we should analyze the features of books. Book is a kind of content product with spiritual and cultural connotation. The circulation and distribution also have the characteristics of spiritual and cultural activities. When people buy and read books, consumers can have spiritual communication with authors, editors and other buyers. Thus they will get rational or emotional satisfaction. That is to say, books can meet consumers' spiritual requirements. This is the value of books. That is to say the product is valuable. And viral marketing needs valuable products or services.

Book is a medium of transmission. Information is symbolized through words or images. And the symbolized information is transformed paper books and e-books by printing and electronic copy techniques for people's easy carrying, reading and spreading. That is to say, books are suitable for the spread activities.

Book is a low cost product. But this feature is often masked by the high profits of some best-sellers. A 20 Yuan book will be considered expensive. According to the industry's tradition, if a book is issued over 10 thousand copies, it will be called bestsellers. However, a little can be used as marketing costs among this two hundred thousand Yuan. But some presses invest heavily in book

advertisements on television. It is difficult to recoup the cost from the profits of the book. Usually cost-recovery is based on the overstock of other books. However, viral marketing just need to cost a small amount of manual labor and material resources. It is suitable for low-cost products and services.

Secondly, rapid development of Internet gives more opportunities to this industry cluster. With the Internet technology developing more and more maturely and cheap cost, Internet network combines enterprises, institutions, social organizations and individuals tightly like all-purpose adhesive. It makes the information exchange available between each other. The spread speed of information is much faster than before. The most important and also the most essential factor of marketing is the information transmission and exchange between organizations and individuals. Without information exchange, transaction would not exist. So the modern network marketing directly affects the development and future of book marketing field.

The rapid development of Internet provides a broad platform for viral marketing. According to the report of China's Internet development which China Internet Network Information Center(CNNIC) made on January 19 in 2011, there were 457 million Chinese net citizens in total, among which, 450 million were broadband net citizens and 303 million were mobile phone net citizens. By the end of December in 2010, the number increased to 457 million, with a rise of 73.3 million over the last year. The popularization rate of the Internet in 2010 reached 34.3% which was 5.4% higher than that in 2009. The number of mobile phone net citizens reached 303 million with an increase of 69.3 million. The proportion of mobile phone net citizens to all the net citizens further increased from 60.8% to 66.2%. Now the total number of Chinese netizens ranks first in the world. Meanwhile, the number of Chinese websites reached 2.79 million, 2.05 million of CN websites. Overall, the rapid development of China's Internet provides a vast development space for book-sale industry to apply viral marketing.

In order to implement viral marketing strategy successfully, it is very important to know the following tips.

#### 1) Seize susceptible population

Susceptible population means some interest groups. The goal of marketing is to meet the needs of consumers. Based on the concept of viral marketing, its target consumers shall be Internet users rather than non-Internet users. According to the CNNIC survey, young net citizens are in the majority, mostly born in the 1980s and later. They pursue personalization and self-consciousness. They are interested in best-selling books, even obsessed with them. In addition, many of net citizens are students who are inclined to make a sense of rejection for those similar textbooks. And Internet can bring them information and entertainment. Nonetheless, those text books and references are extremely popular, especially English guidance books.

#### 2) Construct the spread pathway of "virus".

Pathway, namely channel, is the guarantee of viral marketing to be received noiselessly. Generally speaking, the spread channel of word of mouth is only consumers, because word of mouth occurs between a non-commercial disseminator and a receiver. But in order to influence the effect of word of mouth on the side, the internal marketing system must maintain the same voices to strengthen consumers' cognition.

On the one hand, the spread path of "virus" is affected by consumers' interpersonal and non-interpersonal elements. At present, publishers in China are insufficient in survey of consumers. They should strengthen the consciousness of after-sales service. They should understand the interpersonal elements that affect the consumers' purchasing behavior from three aspects, i.e. the initiative of both sides for spreading information, the strength of relationship and cultural background and values. Books are spiritual products. It is easy to promote both sides to carry out spiritual communication. If their strength of relationship is known, the spread effect of the book information will be better. In addition, cultural background and values play a guiding role in both parties' spreading behavior. These should be also considered. In addition, when spreading books information, presses should also keep mysterious and let consumers feel purchasing risk. Then look for word-of-mouth information to create the opportunity for the virus to step in. This opportunity is also

influenced by both sides' special knowledge. So presses need further market survey among consumers.

On the other hand, the spread path of virus needs a whole integration of marketing system. First, for book products, either from publishers to middlemen or from books design to advertising, public relations and promotion, every department and every link needs unified planning to ensure that the spreading information is the same. Thus readers can get the same information and recognize the book information and products accurately. It will ensure that viral marketing can influence consumers unimpededly. Second, the viral marketing should be combined with the traditional marketing. Press should be coordinated with newspapers, magazines, radios, television, bookstores, wholesaler and retailers, and establish a promotion mode in synchrony with viral marketing.

3) Create a valuable "virus" according book consumers' demands.

Viral marketing can make the information of products and services influence people's mind just as virus infects their body systems. At the same time, it can be rapidly replicated and spread. Book viral marketing is to make book products or services spread to millions of consumers in a short time and activate their shopping subconscious. According to the spreading principle of the viral marketing and experience of other industries, some principles should be followed in order to expand the influence of books and increase sales effectively.

First, create cheerful reader experiences. That is to say the virus shouldn't annoy people. If so, bad news is easily to be made. People tend to warn others not to repeat their mistakes or unpleasant experiences. According to Joe Girard's experience, a greatest salesman who won the first place of sales on the World Guinness Record for successive years, if one just chase one customer away, it means he lose more than 250 customers(Girard, 2008). On the one hand, even if only one reader has negative experience on books or presses, the negative information will be soon transmitted to millions of people, especially now with the help of network tools such as blogs and podcasts, etc. On the other hand, if a good experience is provided to readers, people will recommend it to their relatives and friends. This will help to establish brand reputation and credible image effortlessly. People generally more trust their relatives and friends than salesmen. So a recommendation from a friend is more credible than a salesman. Many people have such kind of experience: Once anyone has a very good or bad shopping experience, he or she can't wait to tell his or her friends.

Second, develop viral ebooks which can be shared. Presses or distributors always have a batch of bestsellers. But people often regard these books as direct and one-off profitable goods rather than as a marketing tool which can bring more profits indirectly. Now people are used to reading on the Internet and mobile phones. Ebooks are the new need of people. Here, ebooks can't be just regard as a new form of book, but a kind of "virus" which can be self-progenitive and transmitted automatically. Ebook that is used for viral marketing is called viral ebook. Of course, it can be the most wonderful and fascinating part of a best-seller instead of the whole book. As long as people think that these viral ebooks are useful for themselves or others, it will become an easy thing to share viral ebooks. In order to encourage people to spread viral ebooks more widely and actively, it should be made like a gift or a discount. If the content of viral ebook contains network links which are about the related bookstore websites, it will create more marketing values.

Third, create an infectious and explosive topic. Explosive topic is the main point to create an event. For example, a harmless gossip event of a book's author often spread very quickly, and writing an essay after reading a book can bring readers deep communication and infect consumers to spread its information more actively. The disclose and hype of an explosive topic can't make it without the original infected people and spreaders. And if the topic and viral ebooks are expected to spread more widely, the infected way that consumers often used should be also created. For example, people often get their marketing information with the help of online tools and resources, such as search engine, e-mail, BBS, blogs, etc. Their habits can be transformed into chances to apply viral marketing. They can also become a convenient, quick and easy way to share the explosive topic and viral ebooks.

Fourth, combine with the traditional marketing. If book viral marketing wants to achieve a better effect, sometimes traditional marketing is indispensable. That's why viral marketing should be



combined with traditional marketing. For example, a viral ebook contains electronic coupon which can purchase the whole book in entity bookstore, or the paper book has the QR Code and website which direct the download location. Thus, the effect should be better. Viral marketing is a kind of marketing way which is based on acquiescence. Thus the marketing product like viruses unconsciously influences people's brain and let people accept it and even depend on it. By now, people's shopping subconscious has escalated desire to buy the product. But this shopping desire is just a kind of sub-consciousness. It must be activated through traditional marketing activities. That is to say, the traditional marketing can activate the consumers' shopping desire and realized a jump process from purchasing sub-consciousness to purchasing action.

Prospect of book-sale industry. With the improvement of people's material living standard, they also need to improve their spiritual life. As a result, the demand of books is increasing. Book-sale industry will have a broad developing space. At the same time, as China's book publication and retail market opening up to the outside world, private and overseas capital burst into the industry. The competitiveness of book publishing industry is becoming more and more serious. Now book publishers and dealers both compete in traditional marketing field, which is a red sea market while book viral marketing field at present is still developing, which is a blue sea market, so making full use of viral marketing will contribute to book-sale industry.

However, some problems should be noticed when viral marketing strategy is used. There is no doubt that viral marketing can bring huge profit, but also has some unfavorable effects. Various negative effects will spread rapidly. For instance, once one industry insider is disclosed on the Internet, it will spread rapidly and influence the healthy development of the industry cluster. Some information will mislead the public. Some wrong or negative information will be spread by using public psychology. For example, nowadays, many young people know so-and-so star and his/her privacy but they don't know the celebrities in Chinese history and culture. Sometimes, parts of negative information do mislead the public who don't set up correct ideas. In particular, if some educational products like books spread negative information, the situation will be more serious.

As viral marketing has those disadvantages and its spreading speed is so fast, its application in book-sale industry should be really careful. After all, once the scale of marketing is formed, the situation is out of control. Readers are not bossed by publishers to recommend books, but because they think these books are worth reading. Usually bad news spread faster than good news. Thus once the negative information of a book is spread, the publisher will face a crash. Not only the book will be hard to sell, but also the brand of the publisher will be seriously ruined.

In order to solve these problems, some actions should be taken. First, products advertised should be useful and practical. Second, false and negative information shouldn't be sent to deceive users. Third, public morality should be considered into when information is spread. If viral marketing is applied to book-sale industry, it's better to build an exchange platform and keep communication between writers and readers after the book information is given out. Thus, misunderstanding and negative public opinions can be effectively removed and controlled.

## 6. Conclusion

With the rapid development of high technology, various industries compete fiercely both foreign and domestic countries. Unexceptionably, the competition of book marketing has entered superheating condition. However, with the intensifying competition and the increasing burden of book overstock, it has been the publishers' consensus to make use of network to carry out overall marketing activities. Seeking a new marketing method becomes the first point to achieve success.

Many cases prove that it has brought huge profit and benefit. The application of viral marketing strategy in book-sale industry has an important realistic significance, mainly shown in the following aspects. First, the study of viral marketing prompts people to understand it deeply. Second, the study of viral marketing provides theoretical guidance for book-sale industry. Under the guidance of it, a new marketing concept and strategy can be built in this industry. Third, return on investment will be

considerable large with the application of viral marketing in this industry. The use of viral marketing is a developing tendency in future book marketing.

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