

Research on Brand Development of Youth Marketing in the Z Era -- Based on the Content Marketing of Bilibili as an Example

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Abstract

The mobile Internet has reshaped the channels and methods of reaching and communicating with consumers. Video websites have inherent advantages in content marketing because of their inclusiveness of multimedia content. At present, the development of self-made content of mainstream online video sites has reached a white-hot stage. This paper adopts the case study method to summarize the three essential characteristics of content marketing of Station B: UGV content cooperation; brand official account self-operated; official OGV content cooperation. On this basis, the logic of the content marketing model of Station B is explored from five aspects: user insight, ecological construction, strategy implementation, resource integration and business operation. To grasp the future market, we must understand the younger generation, understand their preferences, formulate effective marketing strategies, and cultivate and guide their behavior habits.

Keywords

Content Marketing; Youthful; Bilibili; Marketing Model.

1. Research Background

With the evolution of the marketing battle, from the initial publicity, to the precise positioning later. The foothold of the brand has already changed from product first to user first. However, just relying on users in the circle is not enough to support the brand's influence. With the changes of the times, the mainstream consumer group has developed from Generation X (1965-1980) to Generation Y (1981-1995), and has been developing into today's Generation Z. Two consumer characteristics of Gen Z influence their purchasing behavior. First, they care more about the experience and prefer products with high cost performance; second, their consumption habits will also affect the family's purchase intention. In 2020, Generation Z will account for 40% of the overall consumption power. Not only that, they have already mastered more than half of the voice and become the most active force on social media. It is precisely because of this that Bilibili (Station B), the base where Generation Z gathers, is known as the largest cultural community for young people, and is becoming a new battlefield for brands to focus on.

According to the financial report for the fourth quarter of 2019 released by Station B on March 18, 2020, the number of monthly active users of Station B has reached 130 million, and the monthly active users of mobile terminals have reached 116 million. Since its listing, the number of users has been rising steadily. Station B has grown from a two-dimensional base to a youth cultural base.

2. The Essential Characteristics of Content Marketing at Station B

Up to now, there are mainly three mainstream marketing operations on Station B: commercial products, circle content and interactive Co-creation. Commercial products are relatively

standardized, and the content marketing level mainly includes: PUGV content cooperation; brand official account self-operated; official OGV content cooperation.

2.1. Co-creation of PUGV Content

The commercial content in cooperation with the uploader is currently the most mainstream mode of content marketing at Bilibili. In order to do a good job of commercial content and optimize the effect of content marketing, the key is to ensure the sense of value and authenticity of the content. The content of commercial cooperation will be dubbed "Qiafan video" by users of Station B. This slightly ridiculed term just reflects the complicated attitude of users of Station B towards such content. On the one hand, they are extremely forgiving. Most users understand that being an uploader also requires income to maintain continuous creation. Most users will express their approval for the commercial cooperation videos launched by the uploaders they follow. There are even some fans who are happy for the uploader to receive business cooperation, proving that its value has been affirmed, and even act as a barrage, comment and even purchase conversion supported by the tap release. On the other hand, they are extremely demanding. If the quality of the content produced by the uploader is obviously not as good as usual, or if the cooperating brand side products have obvious problems, but the uploader avoids talking about it in the content because of the cooperation, it will be dismissed by users as "just bad money".

2.1.1. Ensuring the Authenticity of the Content is the Premise of Communicating with Users

Users of Station B like hard and hate soft wide, commercial implantation needs to be objectively evaluated, and up main communication needs to be sincere. "Shi Yin" is a one-million-fan uploader in a Cross-border game area and fashion area. When cooperating with the brand Haitao App, she introduced how she selected Haitao as her cooperation object by telling the industry insider of how to cooperate with commercial advertisements as a full-time up owner. After receiving the cooperation intention, she placed an order from the platform as an individual consumer to buy Haitao products, and then evaluated Haitao from the dimensions of delivery speed, shopping experience, customer service experience, and product quality. Only after these dimensions are basically qualified, the cooperation intention is confirmed.

In addition, Shiyin also launched a poll in the comment area to ask fans for their opinions on advertising cooperation. The opinions of high praise and popular comments are basically more acceptable for the uploader to cooperate in a hard and wide manner. Fans believe that they have the right to know whether the videos they are watching have commercial implants.

2.2. Operation of the Official Account of the Brand

2.2.1. Status Quo of Brand Names: in the Early Stage of Development, the Number of Occupants is Small, and it is Easy to Break out of the Encirclement as Soon as Possible

Like most platforms, Station B has also set up an institutional account authentication system for enterprises and brands. At present, institutional account authentication is open to four main entities: enterprises, media, government agencies, and social organizations. However, according to the current observations, there are not many brand accounts in Station B, and most of them have a low number of fans. Most of the brand accounts have less than 500,000 fans. In addition, the official Bilibili has not given an official operation guide or system support plan for the brand name. Obviously, compared to platforms such as Weibo, Douyin, Zhihu, etc., the development of brand accounts at Station B is still in a rather primitive state.

2.2.2. The Official of Station B Needs to Proofing and Support Excellent Cases, There Will Definitely be Policies and Traffic Inclination

Although Station B has not given official operation guides or commercial products and services supporting brand accounts at this stage, the services for enterprise accounts have potential profit opportunities in the future, and the official support for enterprise accounts will inevitably become more and more Complete. In the early stage of brand promotion, the support and promotion of excellent cases is particularly important for the platform. Platforms need a better content ecosystem, and companies need official guidance and support. It is undoubtedly a win-win situation for the brand and the platform to enter the operation early.

2.2.3. Which Brands are Suitable for Station B: Brands with Content Attributes are Worth Doing

Content attributes refer to the possibility of content production possessed by an enterprise or brand. The important reason why Xiaomi first entered Station B is because it has been observed that the content about Lei Jun on Station B is highly topical and disseminated. Using corporate executives as content IP can extend the production of many different content. For example, making a vlog of Xiaomi mobile phone conference from the perspective of Lei Jun, and telling Xiaomi's brand culture in Lei Jun's tone. Specifically, the following types of brands are more suitable for Station B. Such as 3C digital brands, beauty and fashion brands, professional service brands, entertainment service brands, games, film and television, and music brands.

2.3. Official OGV Content Cooperation

OGV content, that is, the copyrighted film and television content officially purchased by Station B, including animation, documentaries, self-made online comprehensives, and e-sports sports events. These resources are becoming the marketing resources that Station B increasingly relies on. At the AD TALK 2019 Marketing Conference, Station B announced a large-scale open content brand cooperation in 2020. The open resources include 14 domestic animations, 15 documentaries, 6 variety shows, more than 30 UP hosts, 11 major events and e-sports, virtual idols, etc. Compared with the three giants of Youku, iQiyi, and Tencent Video, the copyrighted content of Bilibili is often more in line with the community culture and user characteristics of Bilibili. These contents have also become an important resource for brand cooperation.

3. Logical Analysis of the Content Marketing Model of Station B

3.1. User Insight: Interest Orientation and Original Expression Catalyze the Chain Reaction of Interest Groups

Generation Z refers to people born from the mid-1990s to after 2000. They are Internet aborigines who are greatly influenced by technological products such as the Internet and smart mobile terminals. 82% of users of Station B are post-90s and post-00s, and Generation Z has a strong generalization ability. Taking the ACG culture as the core, it gradually spreads to the pan-two-dimensional element. Due to the accumulation of a large number of young users in the interest circle, it is the largest distribution center for the two-dimensional population in China. Station B has gradually taken root from a two-dimensional community to diversified content, forming a strong youthful, entertaining, highly involved, and pan-two-dimensional community atmosphere. Almost all the content of Station B is generated according to the trend of users' interests. For example, it was a gathering place of two-dimensional content at the beginning, and Station B tried its best to provide two-dimensional content. When users show other interests and hobbies, new content is gradually generated, which naturally forms a rich circle of interests. It provides services to users around different interest circles. Now the number of interest circles at Station B has reached more than 7,000, which basically meets the content needs of users with various interests and hobbies.

3.2. Ecological Construction: Multicultural Labels are the Communication Link, Creating a Content Value Co-creation Platform

The post-subculture research theory studies the trend of a new generation of subcultures, takes identity as the core of subculture, and believes that subculture groups express their tastes through consumption, and thus form a lifestyle and identity that is different from others. "Together" is the core of Bilibili's development. On the one hand, by answering questions and registering to speak, the community culture is prevented from being deconstructed by the influx of a large number of new users, and the loss of centripetal force will lead to ecological collapse. On the other hand, Bilibili is platformized. UGC+PUGC constitutes the foundation of Bilibili content production, and its traffic mainly comes from the High-quality content created by UP. Allow users with different interests and hobbies to interact and communicate in different cultural circles, attract each other's values, and jointly pursue spiritual self-expression and self-realization, so as to achieve the Co-creation of platform and self-value.

3.3. Strategy Implementation: A Multi-dimensional Marketing System that Combines O2O Scenarios and Content to Empower Brands to Cross-border Linkages

As the second dimension removes the niche culture and subcultural identities and gradually enters the public's field of vision, the integration of the second dimension and the third dimension is imperative, and Station B has naturally become a new young marketing position for brand owners. For a variety of High-quality content, Station B will integrate it into its discourse system based on user preferences, find user resonance points in the content, and meet the cultural needs of users in the circle. Through some circles of information transmission or experience interaction, precision marketing is carried out, so as to reach valuable young target users and empower young people to rejuvenate the brand. For example, to carry out offline activities BW and BML, to cooperate with theme cafes, and to explore the payment ability of Gen Z users in addition to major members and fan drama contracts. Online, Station B opens PGC content cooperation, such as fan dramas, documentaries, national innovation and other content, and can carry out content marketing in terms of brand placement, thematic cooperation, and UP main native advertising. For example, the popular "experimental" documentary "Things in History" on Bilibili presents the real and vivid history by discovering interesting stories in historical materials of the past, and also provides the brand with the opportunity to cut into the content and get in touch with users. . Netease Nishuihan uses the protagonist of each episode to perform creative easter eggs, cleverly implanting the plot of "Those Things in History", and the exquisite picture quality and ancient world view of Nishuihan are also very popular among users.

3.4. Resource Integration: Optimizing UGC and Developing High-quality Content Industry Chain in Parallel, Forming a Closed Loop of Internal and External Resources

Judging from the planning of Station B, this young cultural community is more actively participating in the production of content, not just as a pipeline channel. It is mainly reflected in two aspects: one is the guidance of PUGC content, that is, user-made, professionally planned and produced content. This part of the gradually specialized and organized UGC content accounts for 80% of the overall video playback on the platform, which is directly related to user stickiness and activity, and is the foundation of the Bilibili community ecology. The second is the supplement to PGC content, which is related to the expansion of new traffic and community cultural boundaries. In addition to the core animation content, Station B has entered the documentary industry that has not yet formed a market structure, and its long video content is centered on animation.

3.5. Commercial Operation: Explore the Deep Connection of IP + E-commerce Business, and Promote the Positive Cycle of Brand and Content

In December 2018, Bilibili and Taobao announced a cooperation in content E-commerce and the commercial operation of Bilibili's own IP. The UP main of Station B enters Taobao, and better builds an ecosystem of online and offline content, products, and users, and realizes the deep connection between Taobao's second element and Station B. The move of Station B has opened up a feasible commercialization path for content monetization. On the one hand, it can better stimulate the creativity and potential of UP owners, thereby establishing a benign creator ecosystem. Both parties will support the contracted UP owners of Station B to establish certified Taobao master accounts, and tap and improve the commercial value of UP owners through personalized recommendation, content operation and other forms. At the same time, in terms of the commercialization of its own IP at Station B, the two parties will open up the commercialization link from front-end business scenarios to product development. From the perspective of the audience, this relatively stable and highly loyal user group, which is cohesive with common interests, hobbies and interpersonal relationships, has produced a group effect and promoted the flow of information and knowledge in the community and new creation of ideas.

4. Conclusion

The users of Generation Z have grown up under the influence of comprehensive and diverse online youth culture, and have unique attributes such as high willingness to pay, high activity and high stickiness. Station B is an interesting online established from the ACG two-dimensional culture. The video sharing platform, with its unique uploader and PUGC content ecology, truly entrusts the value of content marketing to the user-led creation. In the process of users' self-satisfaction psychological needs, the emotional trust and value resonance between the brand and users are naturally established, and the feedback promotes the realization of the content. Content marketing is not simply a strategy for Station B, but has been elevated to a tactical and strategic level for the long-term development of enterprises. Grasp the future market, understand the younger generation, understand their preferences, formulate effective marketing strategies, and cultivate and guide their behavior habits.

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