

Brand Marketing Strategy Analysis of NIO in the New Media Era

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Abstract:

In the past two decades, China's new energy vehicle industry has developed rapidly, with production and sales trends continuously improving. This article will take the domestic new energy vehicle brand NIO as an example, focusing on how NIO optimizes and utilizes its unique brand advantages to improve marketing strategies, expand the NIO market, and break through the limitations of previous research. It analyzes how NIO uses new media operations and other innovative marketing strategies to expand its market and increase market share. This article analyzes NIO's marketing strategy with the 4P theory and finds that NIO's brand building is unique, making full use of new media channels for promotion, opening up the high-end market, attracting users precisely with leading battery swapping technology and vehicle manufacturing capabilities, and increasing user stickiness with humanized service experiences, meeting diverse user needs. As a result, NIO has successfully stood out in the fiercely competitive automotive market, established a unique brand image, and won widespread user recognition.

Keywords: New energy vehicles, Marketing strategy, 4p theory, Self-owned brand.

1. Introduction

Driven by the global goal of low-carbon transformation, the new energy industry is one of the fastest growing and most promising sectors. China's new energy vehicle industry has undergone a development process from scratch, from small to large, and then to strong. It has not only become a highlight of the domestic economy and an important driving force but also demonstrates a strong influence internationally. Peiming Gong states that in the global market, Chinese new energy vehicles are enhancing the competitiveness of domestic brands due to their diverse mod-

el options and superior cost performance, gradually taking up an important position in the international market [1]. A series of new energy brands, such as BYD, Li Auto, NIO, and XPeng, have emerged in the market. The intensification of market competition has prompted major brands to continuously increase R&D investment, promote technological progress, and improve product quality and service levels. At the same time, the intensification of market competition has also brought challenges. The competition in technology, products, and services among major brands has become increasingly fierce. The need

for major new energy vehicle companies to consider how to stand out among many competitors has become a significant issue. This article will explore how NIO can accurately optimize and fully utilize its unique brand advantages, reshape and upgrade its marketing strategies, and effectively expand NIO's global and local influence and market share. The purpose of this article is to conduct an in-depth analysis of NIO's current strategic planning framework, exploring how NIO can clarify and consolidate its core brand values, strategic vision, and market positioning. This is achieved through a careful combination of internal review and external research. Internal review is where NIO assesses its strengths and weaknesses, while external research provides valuable insights into the preferences and needs of its target audience. This article also explores the groundbreaking innovative practices of NIO in the field of new media operations. It will carefully analyze the strategies that NIO adopts when utilizing cutting-edge communication channels such as social media platforms, short video networks, and content marketing. Through media promotion, NIO enriches and develops its brand message, making it not only more attractive but also resonating with consumers on a deeper, more personalized level. This approach fosters a profound emotional connection between the brand and its audience, enhances brand loyalty, and cultivates a sense of community.

2. Brand Introduction

NIO established in 2014, it is a car company which is completely different from traditional car companies, positioning itself as a high-end brand from the beginning by participating in Formula E competition. NIO is a new entrant in the automotive sector, which was the first company to be listed and achieve mass production, thereby securing a strong market position [2]. NIO prioritizes brand building before produce first car. Their first car was a sports car which designed for the Nurburgring racetrack, emphasizing sportiness, brand performance, and comfort. In 2017, the NIO EP9 sports car broke the new lap time record of the Nurburgring North Ring Circuit with a time of 6 minutes and 45 seconds, becoming the fastest production model in New North at present. EP9 super running show technical strength which can help NIO builds high-end brand image and gradually penetrates into popular products. After that, they produce the first SUV car ES8 in 2017. NIO was listed on the New York Stock Exchange in the next year. NIO takes intelligent electric vehicles as a starting point to build a community, responsible for the design, development, manufacturing and sales of high-end intelligent electric vehicles, and promote the innovation of new generation technologies such as intelligent assist-

ed driving, digital technology, electric powertrain and battery. They have NIO house in each community, which provided to users to work, and staffs there can help take care of children, so that car owners can work concentrate. Users can also have a rest in the NIO house on weekends. At the same time, different community activities will be provided, such as camping in summer, cycling or Frisbee competition in autumn. Nio recently cooperated with Chery, Changan Automobile, and Anhui Traffic Control Group to change electricity, adding 1011 power stations and 7681 charging piles. NIO's mission is to create a pleasant lifestyle for users, update to blue sky coming in the new 3.0 value system in order to create a sustainable and better future and develop drive technology and experience leadership simultaneously.

3. 4P Marketing Analysis

3.1 Product

NIO mission is to create a joyful lifestyle for its users, which is reflected in the design, quality, and functionality of its vehicles. NIO's cars are mainly categorized into coupes and SUVs. The colors of NIO vehicles are inspired by skies from around the world, offering a soft and soothing palette that aligns with the concept of "Blue Sky Coming." NIO uses its self-developed chips, which are energy-efficient and high-performing, enabling smart driving, smart cockpit functions, and whole-vehicle control sharing. Its smart driving technology can assist users with full-domain navigation in both urban and highway settings. Additionally, NIO enhances the user experience through panoramic connectivity while ensuring the protection of users' privacy and security. NIO also features battery-swapping technology, allowing users to resolve range anxiety in the time it takes to listen to a single song at a battery swap station. NIO car owners not only enjoy comprehensive after-sales service but also have access to various community activities and the essential NIO Houses in different communities.

3.2 Place

NIO has a complete sales process called LIPTOKD. "L" stands for Leads, where users leave their contact information, such as WeChat or phone numbers. "I" represents Intention, referring to the user's purchase intent. "P" stands for Opportunity. "T" is for Test Drive, where a fellow guides the user through a test drive. "O" is for Order, where the user places an order. "K" stands for Lock, meaning the order is locked and cannot be canceled after this point. "D" is for Delivery, where NIO delivers the car

to the customer.

NIO also has a dedicated app where users can schedule test drives, view vehicle options like colors and pricing information, and complete the entire ordering process. NIO's sales channels include both online and offline options. Online, NIO has added new media sales channels, using platforms like Douyin (Chinese TikTok) for live streaming, and Xiaohongshu for sharing posts or videos, to increase user awareness of NIO's promotional offers and information.

3.3 Price

NIO's positioning is mainly focused on the high-end market. Its starting price is around 300000 to 500000 RMB, which reflects NIO's positioning as a high-end brand in the new energy vehicle market from the beginning, mainly targeting consumers who have high requirements for vehicle performance design technology. NIO has invested heavily in technology research and development, including all aluminum body, split type battery design, improved battery performance, digital intelligent cockpit and other configurations, enhancing the overall quality of its products. Liang Zhang and Yu Li suggested that NIO, with a user-centric approach, employs a hybrid online-offline marketing strategy to engage with high-quality target audiences. The company enhances its ability to attract customers by aligning with consumer behaviors and fulfilling their needs [3].

At the same time, NIO provides a series of humanized services, such as online and offline joint pickup, free battery replacement, free maintenance, lifelong free warranty and other one-stop after-sales services, providing car owners with a high-quality user experience. NIO's price strategy has demonstrated that it no longer relies solely on price discounts to attract consumers, but is focused on creating high-quality, high-performance cars, truly investing funds and technology into the research and development of automobiles, providing customers with a better travel experience.

3.4 Promotion

NIO's marketing strategy is entirely different from traditional car companies as they prioritize brand building over car production. New media operations are also a major sales strategy for NIO. In 2024, Mei Pan emphasized the importance for businesses to concentrate on establishing and bolstering their brand image, as well as raising brand awareness and reputation [4]. This can be achieved by highlighting the company's technological prowess, service quality, and corporate ethos across various media and social platforms, thereby enhancing the brand image

and boosting consumer confidence in their offerings [4]. The positioning of NIO is very clear, from the start, it positioned itself as a high-end brand and chose mainstream media platforms that match its brand tone for promotion. This approach ensures a large audience and accurately attracts potential buyers. NIO has been very proactive in internet promotion and marketing; they not only have their own official public account but have also established a video platform. Through these channels, NIO is able to maintain close contact and interaction with a wide range of netizens. Every day, NIO releases a variety of exciting content through these platforms, including the latest product information, company news, industry information, and various interesting event information, thereby attracting more attention and participation. This continuous online publicity strategy has kept NIO at a high level of popularity and influence in the automotive industry. On new media, NIO focuses on promoting its unique advantages by emphasizing the differences from other new energy vehicles. NIO's battery storage lasts longer, its battery replacement technology is more perfect and convenient, and it has a unique online vehicle pickup function [5]. At the same time, NIO focuses on creating humanized services. Through one-stop after-sales service, NIO has resolved buyers' concerns and provided users with a better experience. In summary, NIO's publicity strategy reflects its innovative spirit and a full understanding of market user needs, successfully shaping a high-end, young, dynamic, and humanized image.

4. Suggestions

In today's increasingly competitive new energy vehicle market, NIO not only needs to continuously innovate in products and technology, but also needs to put in a lot of effort in new media operations to reach and attract target consumers in a more precise and efficient way. Through research on its marketing strategy, the following are several marketing strategy suggestions for NIO in new media operations.

4.1 Continuously Innovate and Create Differentiated IPs

NIO should deeply explore the brand connotation and create more innovative content based on the characteristics of the new energy vehicle industry. A series of content IPs with NIO characteristics can be created around themes such as "green travel", "intelligent technology", and "future life", such as short video series, live events, graphic and textual stories, in order to enhance brand influence and user stickiness [5]. NIO should always maintain a keen market insight and innovative thinking, constantly

exploring new marketing and communication methods. NIO can pay attention to the latest trends and technological advancements in the industry, actively explore new marketing tools and techniques, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, artificial intelligence customer service. Through continuous innovation, lead the new media marketing trend in the new energy vehicle industry, establish industry benchmarks and leadership positions.

4.2 Utilize Social Media Platforms on a Larger Scale and Strategically

NIO should deeply explore and make full use of current mainstream social media platforms such as Weibo, Tiktok and Xiaohongshu to build a comprehensive social media image. This measure is not only aimed at expanding brand communication channels, but also to accurately connect and meet the unique needs of users on different platforms. In the specific implementation process, NIO needs to first conduct in-depth analysis of the user groups of various social media platforms, clarify their interests, preferences, and consumption habits. From this, the company can develop differentiated content strategies and promotion plans to ensure that each message can accurately reach the target audience, achieving efficient information transmission and emotional resonance. NIO should also focus on establishing close cooperative relationships with opinion leaders and experts in the industry. By inviting them to participate in product experiences, share usage insights, or jointly plan themed events, NIO can leverage their extensive influence to further enhance brand exposure and reputation. These collaborations not only help enhance the brand's authority and credibility, but also stimulate potential users' desire to purchase. Cross border cooperation is also an effective way to expand brands. NIO can actively seek cooperation with well-known brands in the fields of fashion, technology, culture, to jointly launch joint products, hold cross-border events, or engage in content co creation. Through cross-border cooperation, not only can NIO leverage each other's influence and resources to expand brand exposure and reputation, but NIO can also attract more potential users' attention and interest.

4.3 Continuously Promoting User Interaction and Community Building

It is an indispensable and important strategy for enterprises in the era of new media. NIO should deeply understand the core of new media - interaction, actively build user communities, and create a vibrant and sense of belonging user ecosystem. In the community, users can freely express their opinions, share experiences, and create a positive atmosphere for discussion. NIO can also devel-

op some practical mini programs, such as vehicle usage guides, community activity registration, to further enhance the user experience.

In addition to building a user community, NIO should also regularly organize online and offline user activities. Online activities such as online test drive experience sessions, technical seminars can break geographical limitations and allow more users to participate in discussions. Offline activities such as car owner sharing sessions and themed parties can allow users to communicate face-to-face and enhance emotional connections between each other. These activities not only help enhance users' sense of participation and belonging, but also enable NIO to better understand user needs and provide strong support for product improvement and service optimization. In order to ensure the continuous improvement of user satisfaction, NIO should also establish a dedicated customer service team. This team needs to have good communication and problem-solving skills, be able to respond to user feedback in a timely manner, and solve problems encountered by users during use. Through professional customer service, NIO can further enhance user satisfaction and loyalty, laying a solid foundation for the long-term development of the enterprise.

5. Conclusion

This study found that NIO's new media marketing has a significant impact on brand building. As a representative brand in the domestic new energy sector, NIO has considerable potential and competitiveness in leading industry technology, manufacturing, sales, and service. The continuous progress of the media era has provided a sufficient display space for the NIO automotive brand. NIO stands out in the domestic new energy vehicle market for several reasons. First, it has successfully clarified its high-end positioning by choosing premium platforms for promotion, accurately targeting potential car buyers, and participating in major racing events, which has significantly increased its exposure and popularity. Second, NIO has created competitive advantages over traditional cars and other domestic new energy vehicle brands by offering more durable battery energy storage, advanced battery swapping technology, and a unique online car pickup function. The company effectively promotes these strengths in the media to establish a differentiated brand that attracts more users. Finally, NIO prioritizes an exceptional service experience by providing buyers with personalized, humanized service and fostering frequent interaction within its online community, which enhances user loyalty. Offline experience stores will be set up to invite car owners and fans to participate in activities. The most unique feature

is NIO's one-stop after-sales service, which solves buyers' concerns. This study provides a scientific analysis of NIO's new media marketing strategies, which will help NIO further develop and optimize its strategic planning and offer references for the growth of other domestic new energy vehicle brands. At the same time, the study identified some current issues, such as the fact that not all age groups are familiar with or accept new media marketing methods. Additionally, the new operational approaches are not widely disseminated and lack enthusiasm and attention. Finally, due to insufficient survey data, the results of this study may have certain limitations. Further, once NIO's sales and operations team has developed more mature new media marketing strategies, more in-depth and extensive research can be conducted to obtain more comprehensive results.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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