

Research on the Influencing Factors of Chinese Internet Celebrity Live Streaming Sales Based on Self-Media Marketing

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Abstract:

The Digital Age has created the rise of Internet celebrities and live streaming sales. With rapid information dissemination and personalized digital technologies, aspiring influencers can easily gain popularity and attract followers. Platforms like TikTok have established a symbiotic industry model where merchants promote products, streamers engage audiences, and fans shop in real time. This paper will focus on the influence of Chinese internet celebrities' live streams by analyzing their marketing strategies. This study collected and analyzed data from surveys while observing and analyzing different types of influencers on the Chinese TikTok platform. The conclusion drawn is that, within the live-streaming sales industry chain, influencers employ a variety of marketing strategies that benefit society, the platform, companies, fans, and the influencers themselves. However, live-streaming sales can also have negative impacts on individuals, whether they are influencers or fans. People need to make cautious choices and take appropriate actions to maximize the benefits of live-streaming sales for the world while minimizing the negative impacts, thus making reasonable use of resources in the digital age.

Keywords: Digital Age; Internet Celebrities; Live Streaming; Live-Stream Marketing Strategies.

1. Introduction

This study focuses on the marketing and impact of live-streaming sales. In this era of advanced information technology and the prevalence of live-streaming sales, this research is highly relevant to every internet user. The study specifically examines influencers in live-streaming sales, the companies, and platforms behind them, as well as the fans and consumers participating in the streams. It employs a literature analysis method to search for and review relevant materials and literature, while also observing the target demographic and distributing surveys to collect data. The advantage of this approach lies in its ability to analyze the strategies, impacts, and significance of live-streaming sales from multiple perspectives, including those of consumers and influencers, facilitating the research process. Ultimately, the study aims to identify the different marketing strategies used by various types of sales influencers, analyze the effects of the live-streaming phenomenon on society, platforms, companies, influencers, and fans, and uncover its advantages and disadvantages.

2. The Digital Age benefits Internet Ce-

lebrities and Live Streaming Sales

The Digital Age makes the job of being an Internet celebrity popular. As information can be shared and accessed at a faster pace, it is easier for people to get well-known and attract more followers. The Internet is a place where people can post anything they like, which brings everyone a huge opportunity to become content creators. After some improvements, digital technologies now become more personalized. People can watch videos based on their data and preferences, which means that content creators' videos can be seen by people who are interested in that topic. As a result, they are easier to get famous and succeed. The most important technique is that online shops appear. Currently, the live-streaming sales industry has developed into a vast industrial chain, encompassing various segments such as streamers, MCN (Multi-Channel Network) organizations, e-commerce platforms, and brands. All parties collaborate in competition to jointly promote the rapid development of the industry [1]. Then, people find out that not only real-life celebrities can make advertisements, but also internet celebrities. Advertising that utilizes celebrity endorsements can enhance consumers' willingness to purchase, and virtual celebrity endorsers are more effective than real celebrity endorsers in promoting consumers' pur-

chase intentions [2]. They can improve the total revenue of a brand by advertising its products during live streams. If they have enough fans, they can make a huge money, and lots of people will benefit. Finally, as the Digital Age brings globalization, people all over the world are connected as a whole, which means the method of attracting fans and advertising products to them will be more and more successful.

3. Analysis of Live Streaming Sales Strategies and Outcomes of Different Types of Streamers on TikTok

TikTok has created an internet industry chain that benefits various groups of people through a model where merchants advertise, the platform offers discounts and channels, streamers promote products during live broadcasts, and fans shop online to buy the products they like. During this process, internet celebrities can make huge amounts of money by using an appropriate strategy that fits them the most. In the era of information explosion, online hosts often create distinctive personas that align with audience needs to gain high attention and traffic [3]. As different type of internet celebrities has different types of target audiences, their strategy of making money through live streaming can vary a lot. Furthermore, the precision of TikTok's recommendation algorithm can accurately push relevant product information based on users' interests and behaviors. This personalized recommendation method can quickly filter out users with purchasing intent and recommend corresponding promotional videos to them, thereby increasing the click-through rate and likelihood of purchase for products, achieving greater conversion effects [4]. The types of sales influencers and their audiences can be determined through the information presented on their profile pages, the tags used during video and live broadcasts, and the style of content in their videos and streams. Their success can be assessed by the growth rate of their followers, the number of viewers in their live streams, and the sales volume of the products they promote.

3.1 Entertainment Influencer

Entertainment Streamers attract followers by posting funny short videos, which most of their fans are interested in amusing things. Young people and elders can all enjoy their videos. This brings them a wide audience. As a result, these types of streamers have the greatest and broadest choices; they can sell a variety of products in their live streams through their humorous style and wide audience. As a result, the cost and risk of failure for them to make money through live streaming are relatively low, allowing them to earn a considerable amount. For instance, On TikTok, there is an entertainment streamer with 99.99

million followers. His account mainly posts creative entertainment videos that are about one and a half minutes long, and his humorous and interesting style attracts a large number of likes and comments. Because of his broad audience, he has chosen Saturday evenings at 7 PM as his live streaming time, allowing him to broadcast when most people are free and willing to watch and shop attentively, maximizing the effectiveness of the live stream and the number of viewers. Each of his live streams consistently attracts over 100,000 viewers, which greatly boosts the sales of the products he promotes. He showcases everyday household items during his live streams, and his humor effectively captures the audience's preferences, allowing him to promote the products successfully and receive a lot of positive feedback. In conclusion, he successfully uses his superiority to make money.

3.2 Beauty Influencer

Internet celebrities who get popular because of their appearance attract followers by making videos that follow the trend, they will appear in the video with white T-shirts and no make-up on their faces when the popular topic at that period is "Your Youth Protagonist", or they will wear red and white dresses when Christmas is coming. As a result, their audience has an average age of about 12-30 according to a questionnaire. Furthermore, their followers also have a characteristic that most of them follow the influencers not only because of admire their beautiful image but also want to learn some tips from the influencers to help themselves become more beautiful. Although often hear that 'valuing appearance is shallow' and 'beauty is deceptive,' humans, during the infant stage when they are not influenced by social norms, still tend to focus on attractive faces and spend significantly more time looking at them compared to ordinary faces. This shows that attractiveness is indeed a form of productivity [5]. The products they primarily promote are cosmetics and clothing—items that can enhance people's appearance. Those influencers' advantage lies in their good looks and physique, allowing them to make the products they promote appear more appealing and effective. This creates a feeling among their fans that anyone can become more attractive by purchasing these products, thereby boosting sales. A representative example is a beauty streamer on TikTok with 10.01 million followers, who uses her advantages to earn money through live streaming. With her slender and fit figure, she attracts countless young fans, and she leverages the desires of her audience for beauty by promoting products such as makeup, women's clothing, and weight loss pills. Because of her outstanding facial features, even ordinary makeup looks appealing, leading purchasing fans to believe that they can look as good as her if they buy these

cosmetics. Additionally, the women's clothing she endorses gives the impression of great fit and can enhance one's figure, attracting a large number of young buyers. Finally, the weight loss pills she promotes seem convincing and reliable due to her naturally slim physique, easily gaining the trust of her fans and encouraging them to try the products. This also taps into the current desire for beauty without effort.

3.3 Ordinary Live-Streaming Seller

Ordinary sellers don't have beautiful appearances or humorous personalities that can attract loyal fans. As a result, they will use the numerous discounts in their live streams to draw people's attention. For example, a live-streaming host with 130,000 followers attracts people to buy through the benefits offered in her live stream, as she does not have a very wide audience. She sells small decorative items in her live stream, and when people purchase items worth 20 yuan, she adds extra charms to the order as a bonus. Almost every time someone places an order, they receive double the amount they paid for. This creates a sense of getting a good deal, making people more willing to buy. Additionally, she packages the orders for buyers during the live stream, and when she fills the packages to the brim with various items, even casual viewers who stumble upon her stream feel like they are getting a great bargain. This encourages them to place orders out of interest. Therefore, this type of host primarily makes money through live streaming by selling inexpensive items and offering many discounts and benefits, resulting in high sales volume with low profit margins.

3.4 Compare and Contrast

Based on these observations, it is evident that hosts with a substantial following and diverse audience can market higher-priced items across various categories effectively. Those who maintain a moderate fan base can leverage their unique personal attributes and skills to endorse products that align with their strengths, often leading to successful outcomes. In contrast, hosts with a smaller audience who lack distinctive advantages must rely on competitive pricing and appealing strategies, such as discounts, to draw in potential buyers. Consequently, the success of sales influencers hinges on several key factors: a robust fan base, an engaging and captivating live-streaming approach, and the ability to convincingly promote products. This multi-faceted strategy enables influencers to maximize their impact and reach within the competitive landscape of live commerce, ultimately driving sales, fostering a loyal customer base, and attracting more businesses to cooperate.

4. Reasons Why Influencers Can Make

Money Through Live Streaming Sales

4.1 Support from Company

The company can assist in developing a comprehensive content strategy to ensure the celebrity's content resonates with their audience. This may involve creating high-quality, engaging content, and leveraging different formats such as videos, podcasts, and social media posts. As a result, the influencers can better know how to attract their audience and sell products in a way that their target audience will prefer.

The company can manage the celebrity's social media accounts, and ensure consistent, and engaging interactions with followers. This includes posting content, responding to comments, and utilizing social media trends to increase visibility. Answering fans' comments is a good way to attract more fans because this action can give people an image that the influencer is friendly and kind. Furthermore, this action can also strengthen the relationship between the influencer and the fans, and the fans are more likely to buy products from the influencer's live streams.

The company can help the internet celebrity secure lucrative brand partnerships and sponsorships. This involves identifying brands that align with the celebrity's image and negotiating favorable deals that can include sponsored content, product placements, and endorsements.

4.2 Support from Fans

First, increased engagement from fans, such as likes, shares, and comments, can boost the visibility of the celebrity's content, which brings more followers to the influencer and buyers. Furthermore, fans play a crucial role in spreading the word about their favorite internet celebrities, such as when they are chatting with their friends. Most important of all, fans often support their favorite internet celebrities by purchasing branded merchandise, and many of them will do so even if they don't need those products.

5. The Impact of Live Streaming

5.1 Influencers

The profession of live streaming can have many impacts on the influencers themselves. Firstly, influencers often become more disciplined to maintain a good image, adopting healthy eating habits and exercising more. Secondly, they can make many like-minded friends in the same field through live streaming and sales. Most importantly, this profession can bring in substantial income; once successful, an influencer's earnings from a single live stream can be equivalent to several months' salary for an average person. However, at the same time, influencers can easily fall into anxiety due to competition within the industry, such

as constantly undergoing cosmetic procedures to enhance their appearance and become more competitive among other influencers. Being watched by countless people every day can result in receiving numerous criticisms and accusations, leading to serious depression and affecting their normal lives.

5.2 Company

The success of an influencer in live streaming sales can also bring benefits to the company they belong to. Firstly, it can enhance the company's visibility, attracting more attention to the entertainment company. This not only brings in more fans for the company but also attracts potential influencers to join, paving the way for greater success. Secondly, successful influencers can generate substantial revenue for the company, as a significant portion of the income from their live streams will belong to the company. Lastly, it can also boost the visibility of other influencers within the company. For example, a well-known influencer can collaborate with lesser-known influencers to create videos and do live streams, thereby increasing the attention and recognition of those who are not as famous. For businesses, the introduction of e-commerce live streaming has created new profit points, meeting the increasingly diverse needs of consumers. It has provided greater opportunities for breaking through barriers to growth and establishing a foothold in a highly competitive market [6].

5.3 Users

Internet users can also benefit in many ways. For consumers, e-commerce live streaming enhances user experience and interactivity, providing an extraordinary shopping experience that makes shopping more flexible and diverse, stimulating users' consumption needs and purchase intentions [6]. Firstly, they can watch more real-life reviews before shopping, rather than just making decisions based on promotional images from online stores. Secondly, with the increasing prevalence of live-streaming sales, people can discover more quality products. However, at the same time, live-streaming sales can lead to excessive consumption among internet users. This is because it can be difficult for people to discern the exaggerated claims made during live streams, making it hard to judge the actual practicality of a product. Before making a purchase decision, consumers need to gather as much information about the product from multiple perspectives to make a rational decision [7]. Additionally, people may fall into feelings of inferiority and distorted aesthetics, often seeking to emulate their favorite influencers, which can lead to both physical and mental health issues. The rapid development of the live-streaming sales model has led to increasing issues such as counterfeiting, inferior products,

and false advertising. Additionally, the immediacy of live-streaming influencers makes it easier for consumers to engage in impulse buying, while the interactive nature of the live-streaming environment encourages consumers to follow trends in shopping [8].

5.4 Platform

Online platforms can also benefit from the phenomenon of live-streaming sales. Firstly, they can extract significant profits from the earnings generated by each influencer's live-streaming sessions. As live streaming becomes more popular, platforms often emerge as the biggest beneficiaries. Additionally, the rise of live streaming can encourage more people to become influencers, which allows the platforms to earn even more commissions. Finally, an influential live-streaming salesperson can attract more users to the platform. While an influencer may post videos on multiple platforms to increase their visibility, they typically choose to live stream on just one platform. As a result, many loyal fans from other platforms may download the chosen platform just to watch their live streams.

5.5 Society

For society as a whole, the phenomenon of live-streaming sales can help reduce regional development imbalances and promote economic growth. In the process of economic development, the e-commerce economy plays a very important role, especially in the current new media environment, where the e-commerce economy has made significant progress, and live-streaming sales have become a typical form of e-commerce [9]. In the past, farmers or small businesses in rural towns often found it difficult to gain visibility, making it hard to sustain their livelihoods. However, with the introduction of live-streaming sales mechanisms, they can now sell products online themselves or collaborate with well-known influencers to showcase their products, allowing people from all over the world to see what they have to offer [10].

6. Discussion

6.1 Providing Trends and Inspiration

The times can provide influencers in live streaming sales with trends and inspiration; for example, the 'dopamine style' that became popular in the first half of 2024 in China has given hosts new ideas, leading more and more hosts to promote brightly colored cosmetics and highly saturated clothing and accessories in their live streams.

6.2 Impact on Aesthetics

The times will continuously change aesthetic standards, allowing many fortunate influencers to reap the benefits. However, many influencers also face public criticism as

a result. For example, around 2018, the mainstream aesthetic on the Chinese internet emphasized being ‘fair and thin,’ which led to many influencers with fair skin and slim figures receiving a lot of love and gaining opportunities to sell products. At the same time, influencers who were not slim or had darker skin often received aggressive comments, such as suggesting them lose weight, during their live streams. However, after 2023, people began to recognize the diversity of aesthetics, with more individuals encouraging and appreciating robust bodies and healthy, tanned skin. As a result, these influencers gained significant attention. Meanwhile, those who once enjoyed the benefits of the prevailing aesthetic of being fair and thin frequently faced criticism for being ‘unhealthy’ or ‘aesthetically distorted,’ causing them to lose many opportunities to make money.

6.3 Brings Other Disadvantages

The social context can also bring other negative consequences. First, the ideological emphasis in China on everyone contributing to society and working hard has led to significant criticism of the profession of influencers, who often have high entertainment value but do not require extensive cultural knowledge or qualifications. Many believe that this informal profession is damaging to society. As a result, influencers face many restrictions in this context; for example, content review for videos has become increasingly strict, and videos that are not recognized receive lower viewership. In such an environment, it is very challenging for influencers to succeed in live streaming sales. At the same time, in this era of rapid internet development and fast information dissemination, every action of influencers can be magnified, and any behavior that does not align with mainstream ideology can attract significant public criticism, jeopardizing their streaming careers.

7. Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that while live streaming commerce benefits companies and platforms, it also presents certain negative impacts for influencers and consumers. Consequently, the research concludes that in the digital age, the rational use of resources and thoughtful actions can contribute to individual and even societal economic development, paving the way for new industries.

This study offers valuable insights for future research in this area, particularly regarding the tendency to overly romanticize live streaming and the belief that making money through it is easy. It also addresses the reluctance to accept changes in the times and the dismissal of online work as a legitimate profession. This duality of the live streaming commerce phenomenon highlights the need for future research to focus more on how to effectively utilize online platforms to drive economic growth while mitigating the negative impacts of live streaming.

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