

# Emotional marketing in the digital age: emotional mobilization in short video content and audience interaction

Yuquan Cao

## Abstract:

With the rapid development of digital media technology, short video has become one of the most popular forms of information dissemination and entertainment in the world. This paper aims to explore the role and significance of emotional mobilization mechanisms and theories in the creation and dissemination of short video content. By analyzing different types of short video content, we study how emotions are mobilized to attract the audience, and the impact of this emotional mobilization on audience behavior. This study first reviews the basic theories of emotional mobilization, including emotion theories from psychological and communication perspectives, and how emotions are manipulated and expressed in short videos. This paper also explores the application of emotional mobilization in short video marketing and social mobilization, assessing its effect and impact in social communication. Studies have found that emotional mobilization plays a dual role in short videos: on the one hand, it can significantly enhance the attractiveness and persuasiveness of information, and promote emotional resonance and behavioral participation of the audience; on the other hand, excessive or improper emotional manipulation may have numerous negative effects on society, mainly in the construction of personal values. Finally, this paper presents prospects for future research to more effectively apply emotional mobilization mechanisms in short video production.

**Keywords:** short video, emotional mobilization, emotional theory, content analysis, social communication

## 1. Foreword

According to the 53rd Statistical Report on Internet Development in China, by December 2023, the number of Internet users in China had reached 1.092 billion, representing 24.8 million more Internet users than in December 2022, and the Internet penetration rate reached 77.5 percent. According to industry statistics, there are 1.067 billion online video users, including 1.053 billion short video users.

In the digital age, the proliferation of short video content on TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and other platforms has not only changed the pattern of media consumption, but also reshaped the way content creators interact with audiences. These platforms, characterized by short, refined videos, make information spread more quickly and widely. In this context, understanding the mechanisms of emotional mobilization and the application of their theory to short videos becomes particularly important. Emotion plays a core role in human communication and interaction. With the help of their unique audio-visual means, short videos can effectively stimulate the audience's emotional response, so as to enhance the attraction and influence of

information.

## 2. Application of emotional mobilization theory in short video content

In psychology, the study of emotional mobilization theory holds that emotion is the main force behind people's behavior. According to this theory, emotions can stimulate people's behavior and influence their decisions and choices. In the field of communication, emotional mobilization theory emphasizes influencing people's behavior and attitudes through emotion and emotional expression. It believes that emotional elements play a key role in the process of news communication, stimulating the resonance and empathy of the public, and subsequently impacting their decisions and actions. Short videos empower the user through language, pictures, rhythm, characters, and other forms, and the user has the right to evaluate the video by liking or upvoting the content.[1] Through this direct way of interacting with users, the short video content can leave a deeper impression on users in the dissemination process, thereby enhancing the psychological emotional resonance between the content and users. This allows the short video creators to achieve their communication purpose and so-

cial effect.

Many new media platforms provide a wide range of performance platforms and real-time public opinion spaces for emotional mobilization. Short video platforms, such as TikTok and Kuaishou, both utilize the strong visual and auditory stimulation to quickly capture the audience's attention and trigger specific emotional responses through carefully designed content, achieving efficient emotional transmission in a very short time. This emotional stimulation not only enhances the audience's memory of the video content, but also promotes emotional communication and social interaction among the audience, forming a unique audience participation mode.

In addition, short video content creators often use storytelling to enhance the effect of emotional mobilization. By constructing stories with strong emotional impact, such as inspiration, sadness, or humor, the creators can effectively resonate with the audience's emotional experience, stimulating the audience's emotional empathy, and thus deepening the audience's understanding of and appeal to the video's theme. This emotional resonance not only strengthens the effectiveness of information dissemination but also significantly increases the dissemination scope and influence of the video.

Take TikTok short video platform funny short video creator "two Yang" (TikTok number: 20722713200) as an example, the creation of two collections "when mom to my school", "my father and I change roles", according to TikTok platform statistics, by March 21, 2024 a total of 2.46 billion views, according to the flying melon data, the average video comments reached 11,000. In the comments section of the video on the "Eryang Zhi" account, most of the audience were "deeply experienced" about the school environment, the story of teachers and students and the main plot content presented in the video. "If only I had done the same." In addition, the author is very fond of and good at using the emotional beginning at the beginning of the video, plus the clothes, expressions and body language of the characters, so as to capture the audience's attention and curiosity in the instant. In addition, the plot of progressive, constantly raising doubts and creating conflicts, promoting logic and real shooting scene layout, also enables the audience to have a strong sense of substitution and emotional resonance in real life when watching short videos. On the other hand, the author in creation and not blunt raised the video conception and value, instead by depicting common life trivia implicitly tell the audience how to do and why, this not only improve the audience watching experience, leave the audience a European Hen-

ry or blank end of video script writing skills also indirectly enhance the emotional interaction between the video content and the audience.

Short videos have strong emotional sharing, and the comment area of short video platforms provides a good area for users to express their emotions directly. Scholars Zhao Yawen and Li Shiqiang found that the behavior of making comments is an interactive spiritual interaction practice to express emotions, and the intuitive words, expressions and symbols make the emotional interaction experience between the audience and the author more complete.[2] In addition, the comment section is not only a place for emotional expression, but also an important space for the formation of community consciousness. Users can not only share their personal feelings, but also see the reactions of other viewers, and this multi-party emotional communication greatly enhances the resonance of the video content. For example, when a video content touches on a common social issue or collective memory, the comment section often shows a spectacular emotional resonance, forming a phenomenon of "virtual group embrace". This collective emotional expression not only deepens the emotional connection between the audience, but also promotes the communication of social values and the formation of consensus.

### **3. The emotional mobilization of short videos in social communication**

In social communication, research on the emotional mobilization theory of short videos mainly focuses on public service advertisements on short video platforms. Among these, the emotional interaction between public service advertisements and users plays a crucial role. Compared to other types of advertisements on short video platforms, the interaction between public service advertisements and users is more active and direct, which has significant practical implications in bridging social distance and reflecting on social values.

The essence of users' interpretation of public welfare information involves analyzing it, an interactive process of acquiring, processing, utilizing, and sharing public welfare information with their own accumulated knowledge.[3] For example, in the TikTok comment section, users can express their opinions, thoughts, and feelings on the video content during and after watching. When their views resonate with those of other users, the behavior of liking and replying deepens the emotional interactive experience. Additionally, in the comment section of public service advertisements, many netizens often write short

compositions based on their own experiences. When other users see these, they may combine them with their own thoughts, feel moved, and even share them with friends or family. This emotional interaction significantly enhances and elevates the social communication value and significance of public service advertisements on short video platforms.

However, the rapid and extensive development of short video platforms and technologies has, to some extent, also caused a series of notable problems that hinder the cultivation and practice of social values, such as social decentralization, clustering of value identification, emotional value communication, and entertainment.[4]

### **3.1 The trend of social decentralization caused by short video transmission**

In this new ecosystem, each user can be a creator and disseminator of content, greatly enriching the source and diversity of information. This decentralization not only makes the information more democratic, but also promotes the diversified expression of culture. In addition, algorithmic recommendations on short video platforms further reinforce the decentralized trend, where it pushes personalized content based on users' behavior and preferences, rather than following a unified editing strategy. However, this decentralization also brings the challenge of information fragmentation and authenticity verification. While enjoying diversified content, users must also improve their ability to identify information, so as to deal with possible misdirection and bias. Therefore, the decentralization of short video dissemination is a double-edged sword, which not only brings the benefits of the free flow of information, but also raises concerns about the quality and dispersion of information influence.

### **3.2 Group of value identity circle caused by short video communication**

On these platforms, users can choose to focus on specific content and creators according to their interests and values, thus gradually forming a community linked by common interests or views. A large number of subjects with different characteristics, either due to a particular common feature, or due to the influence of the external environment, gradually gather together, forming diversified aggregates.[5] This phenomenon of clustering based on common value identity enables individuals to find a sense of belonging and identity in the ocean of information, and also strengthens the emotional connection and social interaction among the members in the circle. However, this circle clumping may also lead to the information

cocoon effect, in which individuals may be excessively immersed in information that only corresponds with their own views, thereby reducing contact and understanding with different views. In this case, the diverse voices of the society may be weakened, and the dialogue and communication between different groups may be reduced, thus affecting the overall harmony and progress of the society.

### **3.3 Emotional and entertainment of value communication caused by short video communication**

The characteristics of short video communication, especially its fast, intuitive and easy to consume form, has significantly promoted the emotional and entertainment trend of value communication. This form facilitates the creators to attract the audience through dramatic performance, humor or content that stimulates strong emotions, so that information transmission is not only information exchange, but also an emotional experience and entertainment activity. This emotional mode of communication can quickly arouse the resonance of the audience and increase the communication effect of content, while entertainment helps information stand out in the competitive attention economy. However, this may also lead to simplification and distortion of values, as complex issues are often reduced to easy-consuming fragments, which may weaken the audience's deep understanding and critical thinking of the question. Scholars Yang Xin in research by sanitary napkin of network movement found that, in essence is in order to improve the protection mechanism of female groups, but because of some feminist from the media speech, interested people deliberately create and incite gender antagonism and social gender stereotypes guide, mobilizers are easily labeled as "Chinese rural women's rights", lead to sanitary napkin movement cannot according to the normal trajectory.[6]

In addition, excessive emotion may trigger extreme reactions from the audience, while entertainment may reduce social attention to serious issues. Thus, while the emotion and entertainment of short videos has obvious advantages in improving viewing rates and engagement, it also requires producers and platforms to consider their long-term impact on social values and the quality of public discussion while pursuing appeal.

## **4. Epilogue**

Short video plays an important role in emotional mobilization theory in the process of social communication. This form of communication uses intuitive, dynamic visual effects and compact narrative style to quickly stimulate

the emotional response of the audience, thus enhancing the appeal and influence of information. The advantage of short video lies in its efficient communication ability, which can transmit information to a large number of audiences in a very short time. At the same time, through algorithm recommendation, short video can accurately reach the target audience, greatly improving the efficiency and effect of communication. However, in view of this mode of transmission may cause social decentralization, value identity circle, value spread emotional, entertainment and a series of negative effects, the author suggests that the producer in creating content should adhere to the authenticity and diversity, avoid excessive drama and simplify complex issues, at the same time, the platform should strengthen the regulation of content, to ensure the accuracy of information and balance. Looking to the future, with the progress of technology, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technology, short video immersion and interactive will further enhance, provide users with more rich and in-depth experience, but also bring greater social responsibility, requires us to enjoy the convenience of technology at the same time, pay more attention to its social influence and ethical responsibility.

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