

Analysis of POP MART Blind Box Marketing Strategy

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Abstract: In recent years, blind boxes, as an emerging form in the market of trendy games, have been sought after by many young people, and POP MART, as a head enterprise that produces and sells blind boxes, occupies an important position in the blind box market. This paper starts from the brand background and status quo of POP MART, understands the brand marketing logic by analysing the psychology of the consumer group, and analyses its marketing strategy by using 4P marketing mix theory from the four dimensions of product, price, place and promotion respectively. This paper not only studies the successful case of POP MART in the blind box market from multiple perspectives, but also provides reference for enterprises in the trendy toys industry when exploring more mature business models, which is of some reference significance for the stable development of the trendy toys industry in the future.

Keywords: POP MART; Blind box; Marketing strategy

1. Introduction

POP MART is a trendy culture and entertainment company, with its first shop opening in Beijing in November 2010. In 2016, POP MART signed designer Kenny Wong to launch its first trendy toy product, Molly Constellation Series Blind Boxes^[1]. After more than a decade of development and innovation, it has completed the construction of a comprehensive operation platform covering the entire industry chain of trendy toys, involving five major areas, including looking for global artists and carrying out cooperation, incubating and operating IP with special characteristics, taking advantage of new retail development to achieve consumer reach, promoting trendy toy culture to attract potential consumer groups, and investing in and integrating related industries.

POP MART keeps up with the trend of the times, keeps innovating and upgrading, and its main business has become more and more extensive, such as: sales of trendy merchandise, artist brokerage, development and licensing of derivatives, interactive entertainment and hosting of trendy exhibitions. Now it has become one of the leading companies in the trendy toy industry, occupying an important position in the domestic market and gradually expanding its influence in the international market.

Thanks to its excellent marketing strategy, POP MART has won a number of accolades, including "Top 10 New Design Brands Favoured by Young People" in 2019 and "Company of the Year 2020" at the 5th China New Entertainment and New Consumption Annual Summit in 2020. Research and analyse the marketing of POP MART. The study and analysis of POP MART's marketing strategy is of great significance to other enterprises in the trendy game industry, and it can also be applied to other industries to innovate new business operation modes.

2. Psychological and Behavioural Analysis of Target Consumer Groups

With the corporate mission of "creating trends and delivering beauty", POP MART has attracted a large number of consumers by capturing the psychology of young people's high pursuit of spiritual life. Analysis of the psychology and behaviour of the target consumer group can help plan a more appropriate and efficient marketing plan.

2.1 Attempted behaviour based on curiosity

The essence of the blind box is a probabilistic commodity with a special commodity form, the core concept of which means that before buying a commodity, you can only know some of his attributes, and only after completing the payment, you can know the complete characteristics of the commodity^[2]. The main characteristics of this commodity are uncertainty and diversity, and this characteristic takes advantage of the consumer's curiosity, which inspires them to want to explore the essence of the commodity, the complete characteristics, and promotes their consumption of blind boxes. Using reasonable pricing, POP MART tries to attract consumers with the advantage of low cost and bring them a trendy experience at their fingertips to satisfy their curiosity.

2.2 Impulsive behaviour based on a gambling mentality

Although the pricing of the blind boxed items in the same series is the same, the actual value of the tide toys will vary due to some differences in design, material and meaning of the tide toys that finally arrive. The actual value of some of the Tide toys will exceed the pricing

of the blind boxed items, and will have a certain collector's value and investment value. For example: the actual pricing of SKULLPANDA's sound series of blind boxes in POP MART is 69 RMB/each, but the market value of the "Sound of Faith" one can reach 143 RMB now, and even the market value of the hidden model - "Listening" has already reached 998 RMB. Based on the difference in the actual value of the blind box products, consumers expect to get great surprises and even benefits from the great uncertainty.

2.3 Imitation behaviour based on herd mentality

Blind boxes have become a popular consumer trend due to the wide dissemination of blind box culture in online media. Individuals browsing this information are easily influenced by the purchasing behaviour and comments of others, thus generating a desire to buy. POP MART cooperates with famous celebrities and internet celebrities, using their influence to increase brand activity, and consumers will follow and buy blind boxes out of trust and imitation of these "opinion leaders".

2.4 Repetitive behaviour based on the psychology of need

Taking advantage of consumers' pursuit of a better life, POP MART creates representative IP images in the field of trendy culture and gives them amazing and unique symbolic meanings. For example, Zsiga is a representative IP of POP MART, whose life credo is "Thorns are weapons, not to hurt, but to protect". The meaning hidden behind the IP can establish an emotional link with consumers who share the same psychology, satisfy their emotional needs, and thus promote the consumers' desire to buy. Neil has proposed a closed-loop model for users, which usually consists of four joints: trigger-action-reward-reinvestment^[3], and the format of the blind box relies on its rich, diverse and unpredictable rewards to induce users to repeatedly complete the activities of the above model, thus increasing the stickiness and loyalty of users.

3. POP MART Marketing Strategy Analysis Based on 4P Marketing Theory

The 4P marketing theory was put forward by Professor E.J. Macarthy, an American marketing expert, in the 1960s to provide an optimal means for enterprises to achieve their marketing objectives. By comprehensively applying the four basic strategies of product, pricing, place and promotion, enterprises can better meet market demand, improve product competitiveness, and win consumers' trust and market recognition.

The success of POP MART is inextricably linked to the application of the 4P marketing theory, and this paper will analyse the marketing strategy of POP MART from four aspects, taking into account the actual operation of POP MART.

3.1 Product strategy

POP MART has a wide variety of products, mainly including different sizes of blind boxes for dolls, badges, data cables and so on. Regardless of the type of blind box products, IP marketing strategy is the core competitiveness. POP MART has a large and growing stock of IPs, including its own IPs, exclusive IPs and non-exclusive IPs, and different IPs bring different emotional experiences to consumers through their prototypes, thus realising the binding between consumers and POP Mart's IPs. For example, the MOLLY series is POP MART's oldest IP, which has attracted a large number of loyal fans since its inception. By bundling the IPs, the brand can channel the fans and traffic flow of the IPs to the brand itself, and effectively expand the marketing effect through the self-propagation of the fans.

POP MART's target consumer groups are mainly young people, especially those who are curious about trends, fashion and new things. The focus of consumption of young consumers in the new era has shifted, and this part of the population pursues the spiritual experience in the shopping process on the basis of the practicality of goods. In response to this group's pursuit of beauty, POP MART creates blind boxes with healing and cute images to establish an emotional connection with consumers, thus attracting and retaining this group of young consumers.

3.2 Price strategy

POP MART's price strategy is mainly based on the psychological and interval pricing methods.

Firstly, POP MART prices its products based on the emotional and collectible value they can provide to consumers, not just based on cost. This is related to the characteristic of young consumers' pursuit of extra value. When consumers draw their favourite styles or hidden styles with scarcity, their psychological pricing of the product is much higher than the actual value, which emotionally better satisfies the consumers' needs and helps to set the premium part of the goods. Moreover, POP MART always ends with 9 when setting the price, such as: 59, 69, 79 and other different prices, which will always give consumers a kind of "small bargain" psychological hints to stimulate their shopping desire.

In addition, POP MART's interval reasonable pricing makes it gain a group of loyal fans. Normally, the prices of hipster games are generally on the high side, at least at the thousand-dollar level, but POP MART has set different prices for different product lines and different IP cooperation models to meet the needs of different consumers. 80-90% of the products are priced between 50-100 RMB, which not only at-

tracts potential consumers who want to try them out, but also consolidates the existing "loyal customers".

3.3 Place strategy

POP MART adopts the O2O channel marketing approach, combining online and offline to open up the whole channel, maximising the interaction with consumers, while also enhancing the brand's market coverage and influence.

Offline, POP MART reaches consumers directly through physical shops, robotics shops, and trendy play exhibitions, enabling consumers to get timely satisfaction. Online channels are more abundant, including POP MART's official website and official flagship shops on e-commerce platforms such as Taobao and Jingdong, making it easy for users to buy products online. In addition to online shopping channels, POP MART has also opened official accounts on social media platforms with good traffic flow to increase brand awareness and influence by releasing product information, activity information, user interaction and other content.

Moreover, international channel expansion is also one of POP MART's successful marketing strategies. By opening shops abroad and establishing co-operation with local partners, POP MART has successfully marketed its products globally. This international channel expansion strategy not only helps to increase brand influence, but also brings more growth opportunities for POP MART.

3.4 Promotion strategy

POP MART's promotional strategy is divided into daily promotions and limited time promotions. Daily promotions include points against cash, birthday privileges and product gift vouchers, which will be offered when the purchase of goods reaches a certain amount and can be used directly in the next purchase. Time-limited promotions mainly refer to time-limited discounts on some products during a specific period of time to attract users to buy, for example, during the Double 11 period in 2023, POP MART launched a time-limited discount on Jingdong, the activity time is from 31 October to 2 November, from 20:00 to 24:00 every day, and a variety of blind boxes are as low as 30% off. POP MART gives certain discounts after users purchase a certain amount, and also gives some products or gifts to attract users' attention and purchase.

4. Conclusion

This paper firstly starts to analyse the psychology and behaviour of POP MART's target consumer groups, with a view to designing a marketing strategy that is more attractive to consumers. Secondly, this paper applies the 4P marketing strategy to analyse the current situation of POP MART's marketing from the four dimensions of product, price, place and promotion one by one.

However, the above research still has some limitations, and further in-depth research and exploration is needed to provide more targeted marketing strategies and suggestions for POP MART to help it better cope with market competition and improve market share and profitability^[4].

References

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