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On the Application of Post-Prints in Publishers' Self-Media Marketing Matrix

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Date: 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

The emergence and vigorous development of self-media has exerted varying degrees of influence on numerous industries, particularly for the publishing industry, which is committed to the dissemination of content, culture, and knowledge. The decentralized and social attributes of new media determine that publishing houses are inseparable from self-media marketing and communication in the production, dissemination, and presentation of content. Publishing enterprises have gradually formed a new media matrix for information distribution across Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, and multi-platform clients. Optimizing the self-media marketing matrix system of publishing houses can enhance the efficiency of book information dissemination and elevate the brand awareness of publishing houses.

Full Text

Preamble

Title: Application of Self-Media Marketing Matrices in Publishing Houses

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Abstract: The emergence and vigorous development of self-media has profoundly impacted numerous industries, particularly publishing, which is tasked with disseminating content, culture, and knowledge. The decentralized and social nature of new media determines that publishing houses rely heavily on self-media marketing and communication in content production, dissemination, and presentation. Publishing enterprises have gradually formed new media matrices comprising Weibo, WeChat, Douyin (TikTok), and multi-platform content distribution. Optimizing these self-media marketing matrix systems can enhance book information dissemination efficiency and elevate brand awareness.

Keywords: publishing house; self-media; matrix; digital publishing; content production; marketing matrix

Classification: G633 **Document Code:** A **Article ID:** 1671-0134(2021)07-103-03 **DOI:** 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2021.07.030

1.1 The Concept of Self-Media Matrix

Self-media refers to a new media form where civilian, universal, and autonomous communicators use modern electronic means to deliver standardized and non-standardized information to unspecified majorities or specific individuals. Self-media platforms are numerous, including Weibo, WeChat, Toutiao, Penguin Account, Sohu Public Platform, Baidu Baijiahao, Douyin, Kuaishou, and others. In today's era of explosive self-media growth, enterprises have joined these platforms to promote their products and brands through the popularity and traffic of self-media platforms.

The term “matrix” originally refers to a rectangular array of complex or real numbers, first derived from the coefficient and constant matrices of equation systems. The concept of a self-media matrix borrows this “array” idea, referring to a situation where operators establish accounts across multiple media platforms in the social environment of self-media, while operating individual accounts with refined management on different media, thereby forming a matrix of self-media accounts to enhance information dissemination efficiency.[1] Self-media platforms are abundant; horizontally, operators can register the same account across different platforms, while vertically, they can register multiple accounts with different content types on a single platform. The formation of a matrix can strengthen the dissemination of specific information, implying that content or users possess cross-cutting and unique attributes, allowing both content and users to flow within the matrix and achieve maximum effect in user base expansion and content dissemination.

1.2 Current State of Publishing House Self-Media Matrices

Traditional publishing houses started relatively late in self-media construction, typically maintaining official publishing house accounts and accounts for editorial departments or brands. For instance, comprehensive publishing houses may have self-media accounts for education, science and technology, business management, general interest, and parenting categories, while specialized publishing houses create multiple vertical accounts based on more detailed professional divisions. Self-media account operations in publishing enterprises are often divided by department, with relatively decentralized operational authority and a lack of overall planning capacity in the main account, resulting in scattered matrix dissemination that fails to form synergistic force and generate greater communication power. Furthermore, the profit model of traditional publishing enterprises still relies primarily on paper books, with few dedicated personnel for new media operations, usually managed part-time by book marketing staff,

leading to insufficient investment of energy and failure to tap into the enormous value of new media.

2.1 Capturing Traffic

In the mobile internet era, self-media's powerful instant messaging, social networking, and payment functions have aggregated substantial internet traffic, which holds tremendous value for enterprises. Enterprises' external information release, transmission, and feedback are all closely related to traffic. Decentralized new media platforms provide enterprises with opportunities for privatized traffic; secondly, enterprises can acquire more precise traffic through their self-media matrices. Compared to other enterprises, publishing houses possess a natural advantage in content, being one of the few enterprises that come with their own traffic. Their existing reader base's traffic can be consolidated through self-media operations to amplify book dissemination.

2.2 Capturing Users

Self-media development covers all aspects of people's lives, fulfilling multiple functions such as learning, reading, entertainment, and social interaction, while becoming more vertical and specialized. In the traditional media era, connections between publishing houses and readers were very limited; many books were sold without knowing who the readers were, and feedback was minimal. The emergence of self-media enables publishing houses to find users, understand user feedback, and better satisfy user needs. In the internet era, users hold significant commercial value. Publishing houses gather more precise users through new media platforms, strengthen user stickiness through operational means, and ultimately achieve user management. New media channels have become venues for reader aggregation, sharing, and feedback, as well as powerful platforms for publishing houses to serve readers, guide reader demand, and discover reader needs.

2.3 Capturing Influence

Establishing a new media matrix for publishing houses can demonstrate their strength and professionalism in different fields. Secondly, important information with cross-cutting attributes can be released across multiple platforms and channels, thereby enhancing corporate communication power. From the product perspective, every stage—from topic selection, market research, author screening, marketing promotion, to reader interaction—cannot be separated from internet connectivity, and self-media serves as an important tool for publishing enterprises to connect with readers in the internet era. Through self-media, discovering reader needs, mining topics and authors, as well as promoting sales can bring both economic and social benefits to publishing enterprises. Publishing houses establishing their own suitable self-media matrices have narrowed the

distance with readers, enhanced the influence of book products and corporate brands, and elevated brand recognition.

2.4 Capturing Business Models

After experiencing phases of capturing users and traffic, self-media has changed the situation of fighting alone and begun to capture scale. By establishing self-media matrices, users are grouped together. Matrix models make self-media users more precise and influential, and resource linkage within matrices easily distributes advertising, product promotion, content services, online courses, and other offerings. Self-media matrices have led multiple business models. Publishing enterprises can also link resources within their matrices, interact with readers, diversify book content development, and explore various business models beyond paper book publishing.

3. Operational Thinking for Publishing House Self-Media Marketing Matrices

The internet possesses powerful coverage and high penetration communication capabilities. Based on considerations of marketing effectiveness for publishing houses, constructing self-media marketing matrices that align with professional publishing characteristics and are internet-based, focusing on book product marketing, has clearly become a consensus in the publishing industry.[2] However, easier said than done. Clarifying the underlying logic of self-media marketing matrix operations, triggering the original motivation and long-term mechanisms of self-media marketing, and breaking the traditional “production-determines-sales” inertial thinking model are preconditions for publishers. The core of internet value lies in reshaping traditional corporate value chains, and constructing a new value chain system for publishing houses, where publishers’ operational thinking becomes the key factor for success. Re-examining the publishing industry, only by constructing a networked publishing ecosystem centered on users, with products at the core, editors as the focal point, and sharing as the original aspiration, can relative competitive advantages be achieved.

3.1 User Thinking

User thinking is the core of internet thinking and the primary element that self-media marketing matrices must address. Self-media possesses public characteristics, and the “grassroots” class has repeatedly risen and grown stronger in the self-media environment. Current business logic does not solely focus on the elite class. Therefore, self-media marketing must care about “users,” connect with “users,” and activate “users.” [3] Publishing houses have long claimed to be reader-centered, but this has often been merely a slogan without truly allowing readers to participate in publishing and distribution work. Most books are products of assumed demand and subjective speculation, resulting in poor experiences. This is both a reason for high inventory levels in many publish-

ing houses and a result of failing to respect “users,” or at least not respecting the majority of “users.” User thinking begins with details—letting users know the origin, understand the process, and experience the results—represents a new chain in product shaping. This is also the greatest value of self-media marketing, ultimately achieving on-demand production.

3.2 Product Thinking

The core of product thinking is “product is king.” Product quality is the lifeline of publishing houses; without sustained excellent products, there is no foundation for expanded reproduction. In the self-media environment, the “bad money drives out good” information asymmetry trap can no longer be sustained. Fragmented information places nearly exacting demands on knowledge-based content. Therefore, whether in book binding, content, printing, or marketing methods, content, and effects, everything must be solid and genuine. After all, publishing is a content industry, and compared to channels, technology, or services, content value is the fundamental guarantee. Content productization, integrating channels, technology, and service resources, quantifies product standards: positioning target readers, product needs, conceptual products, differentiated value, and marketing combinations to form a distinctive value chain and build a highly recognizable brand—this is the connotation of product thinking.[4] Publishing houses must possess this productization mindset when establishing and operating marketing matrices, rather than simply treating them as information release channels.

3.3 Editorial Thinking

Editors are “generalists.” While they cannot possibly understand everything, they must comprehend laws, regulations, and textual rules. Editorial thinking is a process centered on “self,” eliminating the dross and serving as matchmakers for others. Reader needs are complex and diverse, and the awakening of individuality in the internet world has created many non-linear pseudo-environments that more or less influence the internet-native generation. Currently, self-media content varies greatly in quality, and the absence of a “gatekeeper” role is a crucial reason. Therefore, editors should play a more active role, “cutting and carving” without overstepping boundaries, returning content products to rationality, and 致力于 solving readers’ problems rather than merely satisfying their needs. All self-media with strong influence and large user bases are products of rigorous editorial spirit. Thus, in self-media and matrix operations, treating each release as an independent content product subjected to strict editing is a prerequisite for successful operations.

3.4 Sharing Thinking

Under the sharing concept of “use without possession” and “waste without use,” various unicorn enterprises have emerged, sparking widespread discussion about “sharing.” The publishing and distribution field, centered on content

production, possesses natural advantages for sharing. The sharing thinking discussed here primarily refers to publishing houses establishing their own reader communities around product groups through self-media channels, directionally pushing relevant knowledge content or marketing topics to form a sticky, closed-loop, value-sharing field, while simultaneously strengthening content resource linkage and sharing within the matrix as an effective measure to enhance matrix influence.

4. Application Methods for Publishing House Self-Media Marketing Matrices

“Action must be guided by thought; thought must be proven by action.”The operational thinking of self-media marketing matrices requires repeated verification through marketing practice. Comparatively speaking, publishing houses’ mainstream products remain paper books, which do not inherently possess marketing-driven genes. However, with paper book market overcapacity and self-media development, marketing transformation in publishing houses is gradually reaching its prime. The changes in communication methods brought by self-media—two-way communication, interactive experiences, precise dissemination—provide more solutions and innovative measures for publishing house marketing.

4.1 Aggressively Competing for Traffic Entry Points

In self-media marketing matrices, WeChat public accounts, Weibo, blogs, forums, QQ spaces, and others all constitute traffic entry points. Constructing a self-media marketing matrix itself represents the first step in traffic competition. For publishing houses, matrices can connect the publishing house, media, bookstores, authors, industry experts, and other key opinion leaders to form an “opinion leader” alliance, sharing high-quality content resources and user value. Specifically, three strategies are essential.

First, for most self-media today, the pain point is continuously producing valuable, influential, and disseminative content. Publishing houses possess massive amounts of free content and various resources for continuous content production, making the continuous innovation of high-quality content the first step in traffic entry competition.[5]

Second, concentrated release of marketing information. The greatest characteristic of the information age is information redundancy. Readers’ time is limited while information is infinitely generated, with old information constantly being covered by new information. Therefore, through matrices, content can be centrally distributed within a short timeframe to form “opinions,” guide “public opinion,” and enable widespread information dissemination. All nodes in the self-media marketing matrix must interconnect, maximizing the mining of various reader needs, enhancing matrix user stickiness, and providing reading solutions for readers. Moreover, traditional bookstore channels can be leveraged to occupy offline traffic entry points.

Third, controlling the dissemination of marketing information. The greatest characteristic of self-media is the complication of communication subjects, with more uncertain individuals participating in dissemination. For information issuers, it is difficult to determine how all communication subjects will retell the message or the speed of dissemination.[6] Therefore, publishing houses must master dissemination patterns, control the rhythm of marketing information release, create gradients in marketing content, and master emergency plans for public opinion regulation to avoid losing control of public sentiment and generating negative effects.

4.2 Continuously Iterating Communication Technology

The iterative capability of internet technology is remarkably superior, with IT product performance such as computers doubling approximately every 18 months. Each technological iteration creates more tools, whether social platforms like Weibo, WeChat, and QQ, or resource platforms like Dedao, Fenda, and Zhihu. Technological progress appropriately enhances individual communication capabilities and brings renewed enthusiasm for updated communication methods. From the perspective of “Internet Plus,” publishing houses’ ability to use information technology for marketing promotion needs improvement.

First, emphasizing formalism. Self-media marketing content requires design, from titles to text, emphasizing both strong readability and high recognizability. “Aesthetic” and “professional” : aesthetic appeal captures attention, and in the “screen-reading” era, seizing attention is a prerequisite for improving reading indices and interaction; professionalism enhances exposure, as vertical field specialization is the foundation for gaining heated discussion and improving conversion rates. These two points also serve as standards for communication effectiveness.

Second, embracing streaming media. Communication methods should not be limited to text and graphics but should continuously attempt streaming media formats such as video, on-demand, and live broadcasting. Against the backdrop of Web 3.0, marketing essentially involves “finding people” —wherever people’s interests lie, marketing content must be pushed there. Streaming media presentation naturally better stimulates user demand, especially for “internet natives” growing up in the pseudo-environment created by the internet, who prefer video over text.

4.3 Comprehensively Evaluating Marketing Effectiveness

Marketing effectiveness evaluation is crucial in precision marketing, market forecasting, brand communication, and consumer guidance. However, in traditional marketing, effectiveness is a difficult metric to assess. Big data applications provide tools for evaluating marketing effectiveness. Assessing marketing effectiveness, reviewing specific cases of self-media marketing, provides cognition and demonstration for new marketing starting points and creates value.

Specifically, comprehensive evaluation of marketing effectiveness involves three metrics. First, visitor numbers. Visitor numbers are the primary indicator for determining information coverage and the measure for self-media marketing's traffic entry competition. Visitor numbers relate to various indicators such as impressions and click-through rates, requiring publishing house self-media marketing matrices to register visitor records and build visitor data cubes.

Second, conversion rate. Conversion rate refers to the ratio of completed conversion actions to total promotional information clicks within a statistical period and serves as a benchmark for reader experience. The quality of self-media marketing content is measured by conversion rates, and publishing houses need to continuously reproduce simulated scenarios for improving conversion rates to provide data support for marketing investment.

Third, sales revenue. Obviously, from a marketing perspective, sales revenue is the ultimate indicator. Against the backdrop of new retail, sales revenue exhibits a clear Matthew effect, making it the fundamental data for evaluating marketing effectiveness.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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