

Postprint of the Communication Strategy of WeChat Official Account “Xin Shixiang” Abstract: This paper takes the WeChat official account “Xin Shixiang” as its research object, employs a theoretical framework of communication studies, and analyzes its communication strategies in content production...

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Abstract

Since the launch of WeChat Official Accounts in 2012, various WeChat Official Accounts have proliferated. After several years of market development and user cultivation, platforms such as New World, Mi Meng, Ten O’Clock Reading, Hu Xinshu, Da Wanglu, and One-Way Space have all amassed large user bases and evolved into relatively mature and profitable new media platforms. As a representative example among them, analyzing the communication strategies of New World can provide valuable references for other new media platforms, enabling more rapid and sustainable development. This paper, through an analysis of New World’s communication content, user base, and communication channels, summarizes its communication strategies: building a highly recognizable communication platform, implementing a user-oriented content strategy, and employing event marketing to generate communication topics.

Full Text

Preamble

Title: Communication Strategies of WeChat Public Account “New World Phase”

Abstract: Since the launch of WeChat public accounts in 2012, various accounts have emerged rapidly. After several years of market development and user cultivation, platforms such as New World Phase, Mi Meng, Ten O’Clock

Reading, Hu Xinshu, Da Wanglu, and One-Way Space have amassed large user bases and evolved into mature, profitable new media platforms. As a representative example, analyzing New World Phase's communication strategies can provide valuable references for other new media platforms to achieve faster and more sustainable development. This paper summarizes its strategies for building a highly recognizable communication platform, implementing user-oriented content strategies, and creating communication topics through event marketing by examining its communication content, users, and channels.

Keywords: WeChat public account; New World Phase; communication strategy

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Introduction

New World Phase began operations on October 10, 2015. By March 2017, it had published over 300 articles. In nearly a year and a half, New World Phase has maintained a production and operation schedule of pushing one article or passage almost daily at midnight, with many articles exceeding 100,000 views, making it one of the most notable new media platforms both within and outside the industry. Founder Zhang Wei positions it as a “new content company exploring emerging content production models and communication methods,” targeting core audiences among quality-conscious readers in first-tier cities. By creating excellent content and integrating it with brands, the platform aims to cultivate a healthier brand image. Currently, its users primarily consist of young women from across China and globally, with content focusing on exploring the confusions faced by most people, advocating for aesthetics and taste, and guiding social trends. It has become a lifestyle new media platform that loyal users identify with, need, and rely upon. Simultaneously, New World Phase continuously creates topics and shapes its brand image through event marketing, deepening brand connotation and enhancing community cohesion through user interaction, gradually forming a cyclical business system. Given New World Phase's influence among contemporary new media platform audiences, this paper analyzes its communication strategies.

1. Building a Highly Recognizable Communication Platform

New World Phase does not pursue hot topics and opposes bad taste. It is a new media platform with a strong, clear personality and unique styles in titles, text, images, and layout. Through poetic titles, compelling stories, essay-like expression, unconventional topic selection, and strong expressions of likes and

dislikes, it has formed high brand recognition, becoming a gathering place for literary youth both domestically and internationally.

In terms of brand slogans, New World Phase attracts literary youth's attention through constantly evolving yet consistently distinctive taglines: "We will eventually change the direction of the tide," "Don't be the tide, be the riverbed," and "Advocate for knowledge and aesthetics, advocate for long-form reading, advocate for spiritual life with material foundations." These slogans embody the platform's unique brand connotation through simple yet profound language, highlighting platform characteristics, helping to unite users and motivate them to disseminate content actively.

Regarding article title formulation, New World Phase employs unique communication strategies. First, it uses interrogative forms in titles to capture users' curiosity and increase readership. Articles such as "Have You Also Lost Someone?", "How Do You Explain Your Job to Your Parents?", and "What Is the One Sentence You Most Want to Retract from 2016?" all use questions to attract user attention. Second, it incorporates specific numbers in titles to stimulate reading desire. Articles like "You Can Blame the Cold on the Weather | 70 Reasons to Love or Hate Winter," "'Haven't Been Hugged for Almost Five Years' | 70 Cold or Warm Stories Before Autumn Ends," and "68 Real Life Tips: What Items Can Heal Your Troubles?" all use numbers to help users find descriptions that suit them. Third, New World Phase adds attitude-expressing words in titles to help users analyze their confusions and find solutions while reading. For example, "Traveling to Escape," "Young People, Please Endure a Little," and "For What Salary Would You Give Up Your Ideals?" all express direct viewpoints and attitudes toward confusions. Fourth, New World Phase presents viewpoints contrary to mainstream social judgments and common sense to articulate its unique platform positions. Articles such as "Always Believe That Good Things Will Not Happen," "Why I Advise You to Live a Boring Life," "I Just Decided Not to Get Married—18 Stories of Acting on Impulse and 18 Stories of Being Unable to Escape," and "Spring Nights Are Worthless" all embody the platform's brand uniqueness. Additionally, New World Phase uses semantically contradictory words in titles to create conflict and provoke user comparison and reflection, as seen in titles like "Trains Are Long, Life Is Short," "Confessing Is More Regrettable Than Breaking Up," "Do You Still Believe What You Once Believed?", and "Everyone Talks About the Feeling of Being Unable to Afford a House, Do You Know the Feeling of Buying One? | Beijing House-Buying Stories."

In content layout, each New World Phase article begins by noting "This is New World Phase's xxth article," lending the platform greater professionalism and continuity as a media outlet. At the end of articles, it places QR codes for guiding user attention and brand slogans to repeatedly emphasize brand connotation.

2. User-Oriented Content Strategy

Kristina Halvorson defines “content strategy” as “the creation, publication, and governance of useful, usable content.” As a new media platform with millions of users producing content almost daily, New World Phase primarily operates user-oriented content creation, publication, and management, specifically including directly producing content for and serving users, and generating 传播 content by incorporating user participation and responses.

In its directly produced content, articles focus on the current life and work situations and confusions faced by most users, aiming to become a useful new media platform for solving user confusions and fostering user habits and dependence. Reviewing New World Phase’s published content reveals that it primarily explores issues faced by literary youth living and working under pressure in first- and second-tier cities, such as reading, music, love, home-buying, staying up late, and working overtime, as well as universal topics like perseverance, giving up, success and failure, effort, responsibility, fear, escape, loneliness, regret, loss, and dissatisfaction. This helps users generate identification, assists in problem-solving, guides the community in recognizing, analyzing, and addressing issues, and facilitates user resonance and active dissemination, expanding the platform’s influence.

Based on user participation and responses, New World Phase conducts 传播 in two forms. First, user responses become sources for article content. By listing different types of responses from various users, it arouses reader curiosity while giving listed users a sense of belonging and satisfaction. For instance, New World Phase solicits responses in text, image, or video formats on topics like “life dilemmas you face,” “when you earned your first ‘100,000 yuan,’” “stories between you and your pets,” “when you felt love,” and “who are you,” selecting some user content for publication in articles. Second, New World Phase launches corresponding market activities based on user responses to satisfy user needs more deeply. Activities such as “Today, We Invite You to Create a ‘City Convenience Store Story Map,’” “New World Phase Story Dispenser,” and “Build a ‘City of Eternal Rain’ with Me” all incorporate user response content and capture the psychological characteristics of the primarily female user group living in first- and second-tier cities.

At 8:00 AM on July 8, 2016, New World Phase published the article “I’ve Bought 30 Plane Tickets Waiting for You at the Airport: Escape Beijing-Shanghai-Guangzhou in 4 Hours,” inviting users to “be their own masters and escape Beijing-Shanghai-Guangzhou in 4 hours.” The article immediately sparked heated discussion upon release and attracted widespread attention from new media platforms, generating derivative marketing articles such as “Escape Beijing-Shanghai-Guangzhou in 4 Hours? Then Come to Nanjing!”, “If You Don’t Escape Beijing-Shanghai-Guangzhou in 4 Hours, Please Accept These 100 Shenzhou Special Car Cards,” and “If You Don’t Escape Beijing-Shanghai-Guangzhou in 4 Hours, Please Continue Living Well.” These extended the cam-

paign to broader audiences, indirectly expanding its influence and enhancing 传播 effects. This was New World Phase's first case of creating communication topics through event marketing. Subsequently, it launched marketing campaigns such as "Beijing at 4 AM," "Not Going Home for Mid-Autumn Festival," "Being a TV Drama Heroine for One Hour," and "Book-Losing Battle" in partnership with numerous brands, attracting massive user participation. These initiatives transcended the basic functions of WeChat public accounts as new media, deepened brand connotation, won cooperation from competing brands, generated fan identity and shared mission, and formed unique communication strategies.

Among these, "New World Phase Library" is a monthly book service launched in June 2016 that has become a sustainable market activity, forming a cyclical business system. Users pay 129 yuan for the book service, and New World Phase mails books monthly. If users finish four books within a month and return them, they receive a refund. By March 2017, statistics showed that 80,000 people had averaged reading three books monthly through New World Phase. The mailed books function as offline social media through user-added book reviews and friend-making, solving the problem of some people's inability to read conscientiously. This activity has also provided the platform with precise users possessing certain consumption capacity and habits, laying a foundation for other profit-generating activities.

Additionally, New World Phase launched a 129-yuan "Youth Edition Dream of Red Chamber," developed a Red Chamber app to facilitate user reading and sharing, collaborated with singer Chen Li and the Good Sister band to create the theme song "Red Bean Song," and set up a continuous interactive independent entrance in the WeChat public account menu, hoping to make Dream of Red Chamber popular again in urban areas. This activity represents one of its profitable 传播 initiatives, embodying its brand characteristics as a gathering place for literary youth, demonstrating its brand connotation of advocating cultural taste and leading social trends, and winning user recognition.

4. Conclusion

WeChat public account platforms inherently offer advantages such as low cost, good timeliness, strong interactivity, and convenient sharing. Moreover, they are continuously improving user analysis and management functions and adding interactive marketing methods, making them new media platforms with strong commercial value. Through building a highly recognizable communication platform, implementing user-oriented content strategies, and creating communication topics through event marketing, New World Phase has become a relatively successful WeChat public account brand. Therefore, to gain user attention, stimulate user discussion, and enhance platform influence in WeChat public account operations, unique and efficient communication strategies are essential, and New World Phase's communication strategies can serve as a reference for other public account operations.

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

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