

Analysis of Short Video Marketing Strategy of Domestic Beauty Brands-Taking Flower Knows as an Example

Jinao Hu^{1,*}

¹New Channel International Education Group Limited, Qingdao, China

*Corresponding author:
zhangzuoxun70@gmail.com

Abstract:

Given the sustained growth of the socio-economic sector and the steady improvement in consumption levels, the cosmetics industry has gradually become one of the hot spots in the current consumption field. With the intensification of industrial competition and the continuous advancement of market transformation in the Internet era, beauty and makeup brand marketing is facing an urgent need for transformation and upgrading. To adapt to the Internet era and explore new and suitable marketing strategies, it has become a key issue that needs to be addressed urgently. In order to better market “Flower Knows”, this paper proposes the following marketing strategies: highlighting the brand characteristics of Flower Knows; increasing the use of short video presentation techniques; standardizing sales channels; and expanding market channels. Although Flower Knows, an emerging beauty and makeup brand in China, has been established for a relatively short period of time, it has stood out in the fierce market competition and achieved remarkable results. Therefore, the short video marketing and communication field of this brand is of great significance for discussion.

Keywords: Beauty and makeup brand; Short video marketing; Flower Knows.

1. Introduction

Beauty techniques are closely related to physical attractiveness. They involve the use of cosmetics, various props and other methods to enhance one's appearance and make oneself more charming and attractive. In the past few years, the sales volume of beauty products has risen sharply, mainly due to the rapid spread of beauty marketing. According to the sales data of online beauty products in 2018, the

overall situation of the cosmetics industry has undergone significant changes, with Flower Knows rising to second place, only behind Maybelline, which has the largest market share. With the increasing popularity of beauty consumption concepts, the continuous expansion of the core consumer group and the continuous improvement of consumption levels, the scale of China's beauty market has been steadily expanding. By 2020, the scale of China's beauty mar-

ket had reached an astonishing 375.9 billion yuan. At the same time, the share of China's beauty market in the total

retail sales of consumer goods is constantly rising.

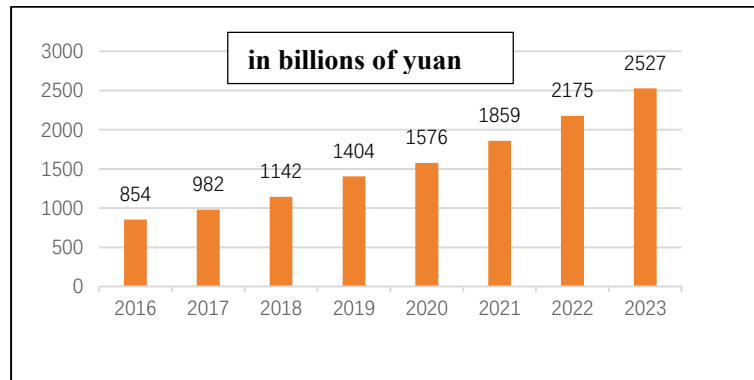


Fig. 1 Schematic diagram of the local beauty market scale in China from 2016 to 2023

Data source: iiMedia Research

Figure 1 shows the market size of domestic beauty products in China from 2016 to 2023. As can be observed from Figure 1, the market size of domestic beauty products in China reached 157.6 billion yuan in 2020. Thanks to favorable public evaluations, the influence of domestic beauty brands is expected to continue to expand in the future, and the growth momentum of the domestic beauty market is expected to exceed that of the entire beauty industry. By 2023, the domestic beauty market in China is expected to reach 252.7 billion yuan, and the compound growth rate from 2021 to 2023 is expected to be 16.6% [1]. In recent years, a new consumption trend has emerged in the market. With continuous progress in manufacturing, technology and services in China, the explosive growth of domestic cosmetics has become an important development direction that cannot be ignored [2]. Many outstanding domestic beauty brands, such as Baique Ling, Natural Care, Perfectra and Marvis, have emerged and become the core force of China's beauty industry. With the increase in traffic and the innovation of product types, emerging domestic brands such as Flower Knows, Hua Xizi, HomeFacialPro and WIS have developed rapidly, and their brand awareness has also increased. It is particularly worth noting that Flower Knows ranked first in the 2020 China Cosmetics G20 brand ranking, marking its first time at the top of the list [3].

Flower Knows has gained great attention and praise due to its popularity on Xiaohongshu. The social marketing strategy has led to an explosive growth in traffic, which has impacted on the traditional retail model of the beauty industry and brought an innovative marketing strategy to consumers. At the same time, it has created different development opportunities for Flower Knows in the domestic beauty market in China [4].

The cosmetics industry is a leader in the retail sector, and its research significance cannot be ignored. However, ex-

isting research mainly focuses on traditional brands, and there is a lack of research on emerging and online brands. In China, the skincare market has a more diverse competitive landscape compared to the makeup product market. However, in the makeup field, the number of brands is relatively small. Currently, many enterprise brands in numerous cases have many management flaws, resulting in many research results not being in line with the development needs of the times, and thus unable to provide innovative references for emerging brands. The strength of domestic beauty brands in China is relatively weak. It was not until the emergence of new forces such as Flower Knows that the domestic beauty industry entered a new era. There must be reasons behind the success of these brands, but there are also shortcomings. Therefore, this study intends to take the Flower Knows brand as the research object and deeply explore the marketing laws and strategies of beauty brands based on the characteristics of consumer behavior in the mobile Internet era, providing new ideas for the marketing of well-known brands and enhancing their competitiveness.

This study presents two key innovations: First, it constructs a contradictory analytical framework between "content lightweight" and "brand story depth," revealing the structural conflict between short videos' "short, flat, and fast" characteristics and the experiential complexity of beauty products. While the document notes that short videos' brief nature hinders comprehensive product demonstration, this research elevates this contradiction to a theoretical level by proposing a matrix strategy of "15-second attention-grabbing coupled with medium-long video depth conversion," thereby addressing the traditional AISAS model's insufficient attention to decision-cycle complexity in beauty short-video contexts. Second, this study introduces a "data traceability + channel standardization" closed-loop governance mechanism for emerging brands. In response to the "lack of audit system causing

trust erosion” identified in Section 4.2, the research innovatively expands short-video marketing studies from “communication effects” to “channel governance,” establishing an early-warning mechanism that reverse-traces product quality issues through user comment/bullet-screen data analysis and designs a tripartite credit-penalty system involving platforms, brands, and users, thus offering actionable institutional frameworks for compliant operations of emerging beauty brands.

2. Current Situation of Flower Knows’s Short Video Marketing Strategy

2.1 Introduction to Flower Knows

The history of the Flower Knows brand can be traced back to 2016. It started with 1 million yuan and achieved a transaction volume of nearly 2 million yuan in just three months. In 2019, its total sales reached over 20 million yuan. By 2020, its sales had exceeded 100 million yuan. In July 2019, the brand received tens of millions of US dollars in Pre-A round financing from Tiantu Investment. Since the end of 2019, Flower Knows has gradually expanded into the international market, mainly in Japan, and has successfully entered over 300 beauty retail stores in Japan, such as Loft and Cosme. It is predicted that by the end of 2022, its sales scale will expand to 500-800 stores. The products and services provided by Flower Knows feature the release of new items 5 to 6 times a year, each time presented in series form, covering a full range of facial makeup products such as eyeshadows, lipsticks, blushes, and powder compacts. Each series typically includes about 20 SKUs. Six series of products, including Unicorn, Angel’s Love, Teddy Bear (LOVE BEAR), and Cat Claw Brush, are highly favored by consumers.

2.2 The Marketing Environment for Beauty Short Videos

On September 30, 2016, the Ministry of Finance and the State Taxation Administration jointly issued a document titled „Notice on Adjusting the Consumption Tax Policy for Cosmetics“. With the further reduction of domestic residents’ consumption tax, this undoubtedly provided a positive impetus for China’s cosmetics consumption.

At the same time, the Chinese government has increasingly shown concern for industrial growth and gradually improved the safety management system within the industry [5]. The „Regulations on the Supervision and Administration of Cosmetics“ serves as the formal legal regulation for China’s beauty industry. China has conducted in-depth revisions and summaries in multiple areas including the production, research and development, promotion, sales, detailed supervision, and safety assessment of beauty

products. Based on this, people have further strengthened the market supervision mechanism, clarified the responsibilities of companies, formulated penalties for violations, and strengthened market bans.

As the living standards of Chinese people gradually improve, their living habits and consumption concepts are also continuously evolving. Nowadays, people’s focus has shifted to how to maintain and manage their public image and are willing to pay for their appearance. By 2015, China’s cosmetics consumption had reached 100 million, and by 2025, this number is expected to exceed 400 million. In 2019, the sales of Tmall’s Double 11 reached 268.4 billion yuan, with beauty and personal care products topping the sales list, growing at an astonishing rate of 115.30% compared to the previous year, making it the fastest-growing product category.

In addition, the entry of a large number of foreign beauty brands has provided valuable references for the development of China’s beauty industry. Flower Knows initially chose „big brand alternatives“ as its brand promotion strategy. Moreover, the fierce competition within the industry plays a crucial role in cultivating consumers’ purchasing habits, promoting the improvement of consumption levels, and fostering the healthy growth of the market, which is beneficial to the progress of the entire industry [6].

3. Short Video Marketing Strategies of Flower Knows

3.1 Increase Exposure and Attract Users

Open official accounts across major short-video platforms and keep posting creative clips to boost brand visibility fast.

Short video content can also focus on the products themselves, promoting them with the products as the core. Make full use of the social attributes of short videos to provide users with interesting and practical information, thereby attracting more audiences. From the perspective of customer interaction, short videos have the potential to reshape the bond between consumers and operators. Consumers’ evaluations and feedback on the short videos created by the company help the enterprise obtain market dynamics and provide a basis for real-time decision-making. Using short videos to enhance personal popularity can also stimulate users’ identification with the company’s values and further consolidate consumers’ loyalty to the brand through interaction with the brand. Such easily participatory strategies not only expand users’ development potential but also increase their participation, thereby significantly enhancing the reputation of the application [7].

3.2 Leverage Platform Partnerships for „Viral“ Promotion

In the field of short videos, the viral nature of the content is reflected in the production process, such as the choice of voiceovers, logos, and keywords, which enables short videos to attract a large number of existing users at the initial stage and encourage them to share their personal opinions during the viewing process, thereby accumulating a viewer base. In the realm of online marketing, Flower Knows has launched a wide range of advertising materials, accumulating a rich variety of advertising ideas [8]. By accurately grasping the preferences of niche groups and shaping a unique brand culture, it has become an unforgettable symbol among emerging brands. Before the establishment of the Flower Knows brand, although there were many brands focusing on female consumers in the market, those specifically catering to the „girlish heart“ were rare; at the same time, although many brands were dedicated to providing high-end alternatives, few could grow along with the consumers as they matured; moreover, while many brands focused on creating a single best-selling product, those capable of developing a series of popular products were scarce.

Based on the positioning analysis of Flower Knows, its target audience is clearly defined: first and foremost, it is the broad group immersed in the secondary culture circle, who show a high level of attention to product packaging. Secondly, it targets new consumers in the cosmetics market, such as student groups and beginners in the beauty field, who have relatively limited economic strength, unstable consumption tendencies, and are easily influenced by the appearance of products.

3.3 Social Sharing Enhances Marketing Effectiveness

Up to now, Xiaohongshu and Douyin still hold significant positions in the field of beauty promotion. However, it has become a trend for many brands to shift their focus to Bilibili. On June 30, 2021, Bilibili released a set of data revealing the achievements of its commercial platform „Huahuo“ in its first year of operation. The data showed that the number of brands on the platform increased by 25% compared to the same period last year, and the repeat investment rate was as high as 85%. In terms of gross merchandise volume (GMV), the beauty category ranked first among all categories [9].

Based on the positioning analysis of Flower Knows, its target customer group is clearly defined: first and foremost, it is the broad group of consumers who are deeply involved in the secondary culture circle, who have a strong sensitivity and interest in product packaging design. Secondly, it targets new consumers in the cosmetics market, such as student groups and beginners in the beauty

field, who have relatively low economic strength, unstable consumption preferences, and are easily influenced by the appearance of products. According to the age distribution analysis, the data disclosed by Flower Knows indicates that 70% of its brand consumers are aged between 15 and 25, while 30% are aged between 25 and 35 (Data source: Flower Knows Tmall Flagship Store & Douyin Brand Profile, 2024 Q2 consumer-relation report.).

Among various emerging marketing channels, Bilibili is regarded as the most favored mobile application by the post-95 generation and also the knowledge community with the highest density of users with a higher education background. In terms of user distribution, the average age of Bilibili users is 22.8 years old, which means they are the main force of the future consumer market in China. This group not only shapes trends but also has a significant influence on future popular culture. They hold the discourse power of cultural trends and become the key force in leading social fashions. This point is highly consistent with the target customer group of Flower Knows.

4. Problems of Flower Knows's Short Video Promotion

4.1 Low Content Innovation

Although numerous works have been released on Weibo and Douyin, their originality is relatively low, and there is a significant degree of similarity. This trend can be explained from two aspects: first, the efficient utilization of scarce resources through moderate use of electronic technology to achieve remakes, thereby reducing users' enthusiasm for creation; second, the similarity at the information level, where Douyin uses decentralized computing methods and big data analysis technology to mine user preferences and provide more relevant information based on this to meet their needs. However, on specific product pages, if users stay for a long time, they may experience „visual fatigue“, which can lead to aesthetic fatigue and is not conducive to the implementation of marketing strategies [10].

4.2 Lack of Review System

In short video platforms, there is a rich variety of content and a large number of users. Besides enterprise brands, there are also many individual vendors. This phenomenon leads to unregulated sales channels, uneven product quality, and difficulties in returns. Take „beauty essence“ on Xiaohongshu as an example. When it was very popular, users' comments generally indicated that they achieved whitening effects within 30 days of using the product, which led many consumers to blindly follow the trend and purchase it. However, during actual use, some people ex-

perienced adverse reactions such as facial redness. When they revisited the personal shopping platform, they found that the required product was no longer available or could not find the after-sales processing interface. Additionally, some of these products were sold on WeChat, and when consumers received the goods, they found that the actual items were significantly different from the displayed pictures. Such phenomena may gradually weaken consumers' trust in the merchants [11].

4.3 Insignificant Product Features

The compactness of short videos, compared to medium and long videos, can be regarded as an efficient form of cultural expression. This form of expression has significant limitations in terms of length, which makes it more convenient in the process of dissemination and reception. With the advent of the „information explosion“ era in the 21st century, „fast food culture“ has developed unprecedentedly. People's reading habits have gradually become fragmented and entertainment-oriented, and platforms like Weibo and Douyin have precisely met the demands of „fast food culture“. However, this cultural phenomenon is to some extent difficult to keep up with the pace of development. Although short videos facilitate viewers' browsing, they cannot fully display all the content.

4.4 Weakening Advertising Promotion Effect

In the online environment, consumers can access numerous beauty-related short videos, and some of these videos show a „live streaming in progress“ prompt. When users watch these live streams, they find that many online hosts and bloggers are promoting their own products. However, it is obvious that the audience size in these live streams is not large. Most hosts and bloggers only promote their products to consumers through live streaming, lacking professional teams to ensure product quality, business operations, and after-sales services. As a result, this phenomenon has led to a decline in product sales performance [12].

5. Optimization Strategies for Flower Knows's Short Video Marketing

5.1 Highlight Flower Knows's Brand Characteristics

To improve the quality of short video content and highlight Flower Knows's brand characteristics, a multi-dimensional strategy framework can be constructed. First, a deep understanding of the brand's core values should be achieved to ensure the intrinsic consistency between content creation and brand philosophy. Second, narrative content creation methods should be adopted to showcase the brand's history, culture, and values through storytelling,

thereby enhancing the attractiveness and dissemination power of the content. At the same time, data analysis tools should be utilized to analyze the behaviors and preferences of the target audience to achieve precise positioning of content dissemination. Additionally, user participation and interaction should be encouraged, and user feedback should be collected through social media platforms to continuously optimize the content strategy. Finally, regular evaluations of the brand image and content should be conducted to ensure the quality and innovation of short video content, thereby maintaining the brand's uniqueness and competitiveness in the highly competitive market. Through the implementation of this series of strategies, the quality of Flower Knows's short video content can be effectively improved and its brand characteristics highlighted. In the process of building short videos, enterprises can fully draw on current popular elements, use internet slang, release highly concerned news, conceive unique advertising slogans, and develop their own brand products. Synchronization, fully leveraging its inherent advantages, focusing on the integration of scenarios and content, and exploring marketing strategies that meet the needs of the target audience to adapt to their reading preferences and enhance user loyalty.

5.2 Increase the Expressive Techniques of Short Videos

Short videos have not been able to fully and accurately present the theme in their presentation methods, thus having a relatively weak influence on the mainstream audience. Given that short videos, due to their „lightweight“ and „brief“ nature, have insufficient influence in product information display, this deficiency can be remedied by using medium and long videos to attract potential consumers and comprehensively present detailed product information.

5.3 Standardize Sales Channels

Firstly, for the supervision of product quality, a detailed inspection of the goods should be conducted. Once problems are found, immediate measures such as account suspension should be taken. Secondly, for consumer complaints, three types of non-compliant merchants should be required to rectify or be permanently suspended. Additionally, to protect the legitimate rights and interests of consumers, in cases where their wishes are not met, assistance should be provided in returning the goods to the merchants and corresponding penalties should be imposed on their business reputation. In the process of opening up to the public, short video platforms must ensure service quality, strengthen supervision in the short video field, and guide consumers to make rational purchases, thereby creating a broader market space for building a high-quality,

legal and compliant platform.

5.4 Expand Market Channels

In the field of beauty products, personal experience is necessary to obtain a true perception. However, in the online environment, users can only observe others' operations but cannot fully understand the actual application methods of the product, as they are concerned about their inability to adapt. The integration of online and offline can be achieved, allowing consumers to experience the company's products even in an offline state. Therefore, on the one hand, it can enhance the closeness with followers, and on the other hand, it can guide followers to promote and publicize the products. This marketing strategy has high reference value.

6. Conclusion

Many well-known brands in China's beauty industry, in their development process, not only share common characteristics but also exhibit unique personalities. Given that domestic beauty brands have the ability to keenly perceive the development trends of the cosmetics industry, they accurately target the customer groups and recognize the huge market consumption potential. In the product field, various brands have the ability to integrate unique attributes with high-end fashion elements; in terms of promotion strategies, they can use diversified means to attract consumers. The core of future research lies in enabling emerging beauty brands to fully understand the consumption habits of the target consumer groups and maximize their own advantages, thereby enhancing consumer loyalty and launching a second competitive strategy in the vast beauty market. „Flower Knows“ can be regarded as a model, providing reference significance for brands that aim to establish a foothold in the highly competitive beauty field.

Limitations include reliance on publicly available data, an undergraduate-heavy sample, and short-term metrics; future work should integrate internal sales/CRM data, run cross-platform A/B tests, extend to lower-tier markets,

track multi-year brand-equity panels, and deploy AIGC for scalable IP-story generation.

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