

Integrated Marketing Logic, Dilemma and Response in E-commerce: The Case of Three Squirrels

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Abstract: The e-commerce sector is developing rapidly, a Chinese snack brand called Three Squirrels has become one of the best known brands after fierce competition. This paper explores the reasons for the success of Three Squirrels, and also selects the cases of Bai Caowei, Lai Yifen, which are two similar e-commerce brands in China, to compare with it. Ultimately, this paper finds that the reasons for the success of three squirrels is the use of the use of sound integrated marketing strategies and the focus on areas of lower attention. In the areas of lower attention, Three Squirrels explores consumers' consumption patterns and life concepts, and based on these proposes a new life concept of slow food and fast life. In addition, Three Squirrels' effective integrated marketing strategies, which includes focusing on product quality, strengthening brand image, utilising social media marketing channels, etc. Its success is inextricably linked to these factors, and it can provide other brands with new marketing concepts.

Keywords: Three Squirrels, Integrated marketing, E-commerce

1. Introduction

In the era of big data, e-commerce, as an extremely fast and effective emerging industry, has provided the world with a brand new business platform. Many old brands have seized this opportunity and many new brands have emerged. Numerous brands engage in fierce business competition for limited resources. Along with the competition comes a rich variety of marketing strategies. Current marketing researches in the field of e-commerce focus on the combination of online and offline marketing approaches and brand content innovation. The former mainly uses online platforms for marketing promotion to increase brand awareness. Because the development of the Internet has reached a more mature stage, the users' preferences will be accurately captured and recorded by the big data. Then suitable products will be sent to them. In the offline field, the brand establishes corresponding physical shops for marketing and selling, organises offline activities, participates in exhibition activities, and makes use of traditional media for publicity and so on. Moreover, the brand often invites consumers to conduct after-sale survey feedback, with the aim of increasing user viscosity.

The latter content innovation lies in the brand's packaging and positioning, novel packaging can attract consumers' attention at the first time, and different product positioning can be adapted to different needs of consumer groups. However, in many marketing strategy studies, consumers, especially young people, are still neglected in terms of their consumption patterns and lifestyle changes, even though consumer needs and experiences have become key parts of the marketing process. After a period of fierce competition, there are only a few brands that remain active in front of the public, and most of them have already lost out to the competition and exited the platform. In the field of snack food e-commerce, for example, the more well-known brands are Bai Caowei, Lai Yifen, etc. The brand of Three Squirrels stands out as one of the leaders of the food industry in modern e-commerce. This paper starts from the process and strategy of e-commerce development in the era of big data, takes Three Squirrels brand as the main research object, focuses on the marketing method of three squirrels, and explores the effective assistance brought by the reasonable marketing strategies to the development of the brand. The research methodology of this paper is literature analysis. As a result, this paper also pays attention to the marketing channels of the Three squirrel products, the concepts shaped by the brand and how its marketing methods drive consumers to switch consumption patterns. The achievements of the Three Squirrels is an effective argument for the marketing concept that this paper is trying to elaborate, which brings multi-level and multi-angle inspiration, and can also provide effective practical experience for the subsequent research on the marketing concept.

2. Three Squirrels Case Introduction

Three Squirrels is an e-commerce brand that sells nuts, dried fruits and other foods, which has risen rapidly with its unique marketing strategy and brand image. Its brand image is that of three lively and cute little squirrels, which is in line with the aesthetics of young people as well as the product concept of healthy, natural and tasty. Its main product is bacon fruit, and one of the product concepts conveyed is that three squirrels are equal to bacon fruit, which over time has allowed consumers to form a fixed mindset that once they see bacon fruit, they will think of three squirrels [1].

The marketing strategy of Three Squirrels is mainly online marketing, offline marketing and a combination of online and offline marketing. Online marketing includes social media, e-commerce advertising, advertisement placement and so on. Three Squirrels uses big data to analyse the target audience and push the advertisements precisely. In addition, it combines the cute squirrel image to produce interesting videos or topics to interact with consumers on various platforms, so as to enhance the brand's influence and user viscosity. Offline marketing includes participating in exhibitions, organising experiential activities or promotional activities. Holding promotional activities can attract regular customers to keep spending and increase their loyalty. New consumers will also be attracted, thus increasing sales. Three Squirrels also adopts a combination of both offline and online marketing, which includes opening physical shops, cooperating with cinemas, launching co-branded products and so on. Three Squirrels' combination of online and offline marketing helps to increase brand influence and market share.

The key to the success of Three Squirrels in shaping and establishing its brand position lies in its precise positioning and target audience identification. Three Squirrels pinpoints its consumer group to young people, using the cute brand image of squirrels to attract young people and make them have a greater sense of trust in the product. A survey conducted by the Department of Management and Economics of Dalian University of Science and Technology in 2021 showed that the appearance and image of a shop or a brand affects the degree of consumer trust in it [2]. Moreover, by investigating and analysing the young consumer group, Three Squirrels can better grasp the needs and preferences so as to improve the service quality. At the same time, with diversified marketing strategies and channel choices, Three Squirrels is able to expand its coverage of consumer groups and enhance brand awareness and reputation. In addition, Three Squirrels is constantly developing new products and

launching various creative activities. One of the main roles of a brand is to give the consumer group a stronger belief in purchasing [3]. The emergence of new products and creative activities continuously enriches the brand content, making its image more three-dimensional and fuller. This invariably meets the consumption needs of different groups, thus increasing their consumption beliefs and enhancing the added value and market competitiveness of the products. Therefore, the success of Three Squirrels lies not only in its precise positioning and target audience group identification, but also in its innovative and differentiated implementation as well as the provision of quality products and services. The deepening of consumer engagement and loyalty through the creation of a unique brand image and market position as well as the continuous optimisation and innovation of marketing strategies have laid a solid foundation for the company's sustainable development.

Three Squirrels has become the best-selling food brand in e-commerce. To better study why Three Squirrels stands out among many e-commerce brands, this study adopts a comparative case study method. Research has selected similar e-commerce brands: Baicaowei and Liangpinpuzi.

Firstly, starting from official websites in this study, it was found that all three attach importance to their brand's online marketing construction. However, the Three Squirrels have independent websites for online marketing, while Baicaowei and Liangpinpuzi rely on e-commerce platforms such as Taobao and JD.com. The construction of self-owned websites has improved user experience, and increased user stickiness and loyalty.

Secondly, research compares the images of various brands. The image of Three Squirrels is deeply ingrained in people's hearts, which is cute and friendly. Liangpinpuzi and Baicaowei have a brand image of "health, fashion, culture" and herbal plants. Compared to the latter, the image of a squirrel is more unique and recognizable.

Finally, research compares various marketing strategies. Three Squirrels are more diversified and innovative, collaborating with multiple IPs, such as launching peripheral products with games. The other two are more focused on traditional marketing strategies, such as hiring celebrity endorsements and TV commercials.

3. Integrated Marketing Strategy of Three Squirrels

Firstly, the Three Squirrels strictly control the quality of the products, from material selection to processing and production, and regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of the products to ensure that each product meets consumer expectations as much as possible. Secondly, the Three Squirrels focus on brand image shaping, positioning themselves through visual image, brand slogan, brand value, and other aspects. Brand image design should visually showcase the personality of the brand, and at a deeper level, make consumers recognize the value and culture of the brand [4]. Its brand image is mainly characterized by cute, lively, and intelligent little squirrels, which not only conform to the aesthetic taste of young people, but also match the characteristics of healthy, delicious, and natural food. At the same time, the Three Squirrels have further enhanced their brand image by creating a unique brand culture, such as a "slow and happy" lifestyle. Thirdly, social media marketing has been a hot topic in the market in recent years. The Three Squirrels actively laid out social media marketing channels, transferred from TV advertising to social platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, and TikTok, and publicized their brand image and marketing activities through these channels, such as holding various tasting activities and interactive games regularly to increase the interaction frequency with consumers. Fourthly, Three Squirrels established a membership system. The membership plan can better facilitate online sales by developing different discount systems based on different consumption amounts. The My8848 online chain store (U-Shop) has achieved excellent results through membership marketing [5]. Three Squirrels understands consumer purchasing behavior and needs through the membership system, and provides personalized services for members. Meanwhile, this can increase consumer loyalty and brand recognition. Fifthly, the three squirrels focus on the

combination of online and offline, combining offline stores and online channels. Such as mini-programs, offline store posters, etc., to enhance brand exposure and consumer experience. Three Squirrels showcases products and services through offline stores, providing consumers with an intuitive shopping experience; at the same time, Three Squirrels also innovates online channels, providing convenient shopping methods to meet the different needs of consumers. Through a combination of online and offline methods, they have achieved comprehensive brand promotion and marketing. He Heping and Zhou Zhimin proposed that with the rapid development of online retail, the online shopping experience and its derivative shopping experience value are increasingly valued by the academic community and practitioners [6]. Sixth, it regularly organizes marketing activities such as nut-tasting events and interactive games to enhance consumer stickiness and brand loyalty. These marketing activities can also promote consumer purchase intention and repeat purchase rate. Three Squirrels strengthens customer service by promptly responding to customer inquiries through customer service phone calls, online consultations, and other means, allowing consumers to feel attentive service. Three Squirrels establishes a customer service team for the brand, provides 24-hour online consultation services, answers consumer questions, and solve problems; at the same time, it pays attention to listening to consumer feedback and suggestions, continuously optimizes service processes, and improves service quality. The purpose of brand communication is to capture the minds of customers, and Three Squirrels establish emotional connections with customers by providing this service [4]. Finally, the Three Squirrels established a comprehensive data analysis system to collect consumer purchasing information, browsing behavior, and other data for analysis; at the same time, they also monitor and analyze market trends and the situation of competitors to adjust strategies and improve competitiveness promptly. Through the guidance of data analysis, the three squirrels can better meet consumer needs and enhance brand competitiveness.

4. Comparison Analysis of Three Squirrels and Competitors

The "Double 11" of 2023 has come to an end. According to data from the third-party platform Star Map, the cumulative sales of comprehensive e-commerce platforms and live e-commerce platforms reached 11.386 trillion yuan [7]. The logistics total business index for October was 122.4 points. Monitoring data from the National Postal Administration shows that from November 1 to November 4, the cumulative collection volume of the entire network was 2.027 billion pieces, a year-on-year increase of 16.1%, and a month-on-month increase of 31.0% [8]. In the e-commerce field, Three Squirrels stood out with outstanding sales performance, becoming a leader among food brands. All three brands highly value the online marketing construction of their brands. However, Three Squirrels stands out by utilizing an independent website for online marketing. The snack brand "Three Squirrels" has formed a youthful live streaming team, conducting highly homogeneous live broadcasts in multiple live streaming rooms on platforms such as Tmall, Douyin, and JD [9]. This approach differs from the dependence on e-commerce platforms by Baicao Wei and Liangpin Puzi. The construction of its own website significantly enhances the user experience, making shopping more convenient and personalized. Compared to brands dependent on e-commerce platforms, Three Squirrels can more flexibly showcase brand image, promote products, and establish a closer interactive relationship through its own website. This strategy not only enhances user stickiness and loyalty but also plays a crucial role in the brand's success.

Brand image is a crucial factor in attracting consumers. Three Squirrels, represented by the endearing squirrel image, has left a deep impression in the minds of consumers. In contrast, Liangpin Puzi and Baicao Wei choose "health, fashion, culture" and herbal plants as their brand images. However, the squirrel image is more unique and recognizable, making the brand more prominent in the market competition. The diversification of marketing strategies is a significant difference among the three brands. Three Squirrels adopts a more diversified and innovative marketing strategy,

collaborating with various intellectual properties, such as launching peripheral products with popular games. This diversified marketing approach injects freshness into the brand, attracting a broader target audience. In comparison, Baicao Wei and Liangpin Puzi focus more on traditional marketing strategies, such as celebrity endorsements and television advertisements. Although these strategies are effective to some extent, they appear relatively conservative compared to the innovation of Three Squirrels.

This article explores aspects often overlooked in the consumer's consumption patterns and shifts in life philosophy. It delves into the purchase and sales channels of products, the life philosophy the brand sells, and the shift in consumer patterns, which are frequently neglected in the brand marketing process. By posing questions from a counterintuitive perspective, it highlights the reasons for brand success and guides deeper reflections on e-commerce brand marketing.

In further comparative studies, the focus goes beyond just comparing self-owned websites, brand images, and diversified marketing strategies. More importantly, attention is given to the core reasons behind these factors, investigating the motivations and effects of the different strategies these brands adopt in these aspects.

Firstly, the choice of self-owned websites reflects the brand's different emphases on user experience and brand display. Three Squirrels showcases a more comprehensive brand image through an independent website, creating a richer shopping experience. Although Baicao Wei and Liangpin Puzi rely on e-commerce platforms, they also gain greater exposure through these platforms. This indicates that different strategies have their pros and cons in brand promotion and user interaction, requiring a suitable path based on brand positioning and the diverse target audience.

Secondly, brand image shaping is a response to the psychological appeals of the target consumers. Three Squirrels uses the squirrel image as a medium, resonating with consumers' pursuit of cute and fun products. In contrast, Baicao Wei and Liangpin Puzi focus on themes of health, fashion, and culture, emphasizing the pursuit of a quality life. This shows that brands choose differentiation in emotional resonance, meeting the diverse needs of consumers.

Lastly, the difference in diversified marketing strategies reflects the brand's flexible response to market changes. Three Squirrels expands its brand reach by collaborating with different intellectual properties, attracting a broader audience. Baicao Wei and Liangpin Puzi, on the other hand, focus more on traditional endorsements and advertising, which to some extent limits their audience. In the digital age, diversified marketing methods help brands better adapt to market dynamics and establish a more direct connection with consumers.

5. From Case Study to Integrated Marketing Application Industry Analysis

The application of integrated marketing is more and more extensive in the era of big data, and gradually involves all walks of life. Taking e-commerce platform as an example, this paper can conclude the importance of integrated marketing. Expanding to other industries, taking electricity price analysis as an example, this paper understands the role of integrated marketing in statistics.

First of all, integrated marketing is beneficial to e-commerce. First, integrated marketing can help e-commerce enterprises to better manage customer relationship. By understanding consumers' purchasing behaviors and needs, merchants send personalized promotion information to consumers, enhance consumer recognition, and make the relationship between customers and enterprises closer. Second, integrated marketing can help merchants send personalized recommended products to consumers by analyzing consumers' purchase records, so as to increase the purchase rate and increase sales. Third, its integrated marketing can help e-commerce enterprises strengthen brand publicity, for example, the use of social media platforms to release news, activities and other information about the brand, so that consumers understand the brand, increase potential consumers, so as to attract more consumers to buy products or services. Fourth, integrated marketing can help enterprises improve

customer loyalty. For example, through the design of membership cards, members can enjoy special discounts, gifts, etc., so that customers feel that they are valued, or enjoy potentially sustainable discount services, so that customers are more motivated to continue to buy products. Fifth, integrated marketing can help e-commerce enterprises accumulate user data, conduct sales analysis, and understand consumer preferences, so as to better marketing. Finally, integrated marketing can help companies increase brand awareness and influence, and increase consumer engagement through a variety of marketing tools, such as website games, videos, sweepstakes, and IP co-branded products.

Secondly, with the rapid development of e-commerce, online shopping has become an important part of China's commodity sales market, and the e-commerce market has gradually reflected the trend of surpassing the traditional commodity sales market. Under this background, it is an important way for enterprises to strengthen investment in the e-commerce market and actively explore online marketing channels. However, it should also be noted that with the development of network marketing channels, there are certain conflicts between network marketing channels and traditional marketing channels. Compared with the conflict of traditional marketing channels, the conflict between network marketing channels and traditional marketing channels is more acute. Therefore, in the expansion of network marketing channels, enterprises should have a comprehensive understanding of channel conflicts, fully realize the adverse impact of channel conflicts on the marketing behavior of enterprises, and actively adopt corresponding strategies. In recent years, many enterprises in the market development of network marketing channels, pay more attention to the integration of network marketing channels and traditional marketing channels, through the establishment of a high degree of integration of systematic marketing channels to eliminate the impact of network marketing channels on traditional marketing channels. From the practical application effect, it has generally achieved good results, better eliminating the conflict in the marketing channels of enterprises, avoiding the bad competition within the channels, and achieving the integration of online channels and offline channels [10].

6. Conclusion

Three Squirrels has established a high level of brand awareness in the market through its unique brand positioning and packaging design. The brand has gained positive reputation by offering high-quality, creative, and uniquely flavored nut snacks, making consumers more inclined to purchase and recommend them to others.

Three Squirrels has fully capitalized on e-commerce platforms, particularly in online sales, contributing significantly to the rapid rise of the brand. The extensive coverage and convenient shopping experience provided by e-commerce platforms meet the demands of modern consumers and have assisted the brand in rapidly expanding its sales scale.

The precise and engaging marketing campaigns conducted by Three Squirrels on social media platforms have elevated the brand's recognition, especially among the younger demographic. Through interactive engagement with consumers, sharing user experiences, and posting interesting content, the brand has successfully garnered a substantial following and loyal fan base.

In conclusion, this report not only advances theoretical perspectives but also offers practical implications for electronic brands and marketers navigating the ever-evolving landscape of consumer behavior and e-commerce dynamics.

This report introduces a novel perspective to the research problem, shedding light on the often overlooked dynamics of shifts in consumer consumption patterns and lifestyle philosophies. It not only addresses the research questions from this innovative standpoint but also lays the groundwork for further exploration. The discussion takes a unique approach by delving into the marketing strategies of electronic brands with lower visibility, offering valuable insights that can inspire other

brands to refine their marketing approaches. This, in turn, contributes to enhancing consumer satisfaction and loyalty, presenting new avenues for future researchers.

Systematically analyzed and presented, the research results underscore that the success of brand product marketing extends beyond precise positioning and the identification of the target audience. It involves the implementation of innovation, differentiation, and the provision of high-quality products and services. The establishment of a distinctive brand image and market position, coupled with the ongoing optimization and innovation of marketing strategies, not only deepens consumer engagement but also fosters loyalty. This, in essence, lays a robust foundation for the sustainable development of enterprises.

Furthermore, the study, examined through six dimensions, elucidates why e-commerce is conducive to integrated marketing. These dimensions include e-commerce's facilitation of improved customer relationship management, elevation of purchase rates and sales, fortification of brand promotion, enhancement of customer loyalty, optimization of sales through user data analysis, and augmentation of brand awareness and influence through integrated marketing.

Future research endeavors could concentrate on forecasting the future trends of e-commerce and dissecting their impact on consumers and businesses. Additionally, an in-depth analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of various marketing strategies within the e-commerce industry would be instrumental. Delving into the implications of the success or failure of emerging e-commerce trends on both consumers and merchants can provide valuable insights. Moreover, exploring the dynamic landscape of marketing strategies in the e-commerce sector can contribute to a nuanced understanding of its intricacies and challenges.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed alphabetical order.

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