

Impact of the Prevalence of Short-video Marketing on the Willingness of Millennial Consumers to Purchase Apparel

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Abstract: Short video marketing has rapidly penetrated the apparel industry with its unique charm, influencing the purchasing behaviour of the younger generation of consumers. This paper reviews the characteristics of short video marketing and its application in the apparel field, pointing out that its advantages of rich content, fast dissemination, strong interaction, and low cost attract many young users. At the same time, it reveals how algorithmic recommendation, precise reach creative design, and interaction become the key to driving purchase decisions. Through the short video platform, consumers can quickly access personalised information, establish an emotional connection with the brand, and promote purchase intention. However, short video marketing also faces content homogenisation, declining user stickiness, and regulatory challenges. This paper suggests responding through innovative content, enhanced user stickiness, regulatory compliance, and multi-channel layout.

Keywords: short video marketing, Young Consumers, Apparel Industry, Purchase Intention.

1. Introduction

In today's digital era, short video marketing, with its unique form and strong communication power, quickly stands out in all marketing channels and becomes an important bridge between brands and consumers. Especially in the apparel industry, short video marketing, with its intuitive, vivid, and interactive features, provides consumers with a new shopping experience, and also profoundly affects the purchasing behaviour of the younger generation of consumers[1].

The young generation of consumers, as the main force of the current consumer market, their consumption concepts, purchasing habits, and access to information are significantly different from traditional consumers. They pay more attention to personalisation, fashion, the pursuit of a unique shopping experience, and brand identity. Short video marketing can meet this demand, through the form of short videos, the brand can be more intuitive, vivid display of apparel products, and brand concepts, and the young generation of consumers to establish an emotional connection.

However, the impact of short video marketing on the apparel purchasing behaviour of young generation consumers is neither singular nor simplistic. It involves information acquisition, brand awareness, purchase decisions, consumption experience, and other aspects[2]. How does short video marketing change the way young consumers get apparel information? How does it affect consumers' brand awareness and purchase decisions? Under the influence of short video marketing, what changes

have occurred in the purchasing behaviour of young consumers? All these questions are worth exploring in depth.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to review the impact of the prevalent trend of short video marketing on the purchasing behaviour of young generation consumers in apparel. By combing related literature and studies, this paper will analyse the characteristics of short video marketing and its current application in the apparel industry, and explore how short video marketing influences the apparel purchasing behaviours of the younger generation of consumers, as well as the mechanisms and reasons behind this influence. At the same time, this paper will also focus on the challenges and problems faced in the application of short video marketing in the apparel industry and put forward corresponding solutions and suggestions.

This paper aims to fill the research gap on the impact of short video marketing on young consumers' apparel purchasing behaviour, offering new perspectives for academia and practical insights for brands. Analysing this influence from multiple angles provides valuable references for both academic research and marketing strategy development.

2. Overview of Short Video Marketing

2.1. Basic Concept of Short Video Marketing

Short video marketing refers to a new type of marketing method that uses short video as a carrier, through creative content production, constructing scenarios, and disseminating product information to consumers, to achieve the purposes of brand promotion, product marketing, and user interaction[3]. Notably, short video marketing manifests in diverse formats, including influencer-driven livestreams, brand-tailored content, and embedded advertisements, to name but a few. This multifaceted approach capitalises on the persuasive power of key opinion leaders, the extensive user base of short video platforms, algorithm-driven recommendations, and the inherent social attributes of these digital environments. By employing captivating, succinct, and diverse video content, short video marketing effectively garners user attention and translates it into tangible commercial value, thereby transforming the digital landscape into a lucrative arena for businesses.

2.2. Analysis of Short Video Marketing Characteristics

Short video marketing has the following significant features: Firstly, the content form is rich and diverse, including plot short films, product display, KOL cooperation and other forms, which can meet the preferences of different users[4]; Secondly, the dissemination speed is fast and wide, through the algorithmic recommending mechanism of the short video platform, the high-quality content can quickly reach the target user groups, and realize the precise push; Furthermore, interactivity is strong, users can participate in content dissemination through likes, comments, sharing, etc., which enhances user stickiness and brand loyalty[5]; At the same time, the social attributes of the short video platform make it easy for users to share the content, forming fission propagation, and the low cost of short video production and the fast propagation speed make it possible for enterprises to achieve extensive brand exposure and sales growth at a lower cost, better shaping brand value and further expanding brand influence[6]. Finally, the marketing effect can be quantified, and through data analysis tools, brands can monitor the marketing effect in real time and adjust the marketing strategy.

2.3. Development history and current situation of short video marketing

Since 2010, from the early static graphics, GIF motion pictures to microfilms, Xiaokaxiu, and other types of platforms, and now the rise of short video platforms such as Kuaishou, TikTok and Xiaohongshu[7]. Short video marketing has gradually entered the public's view and rapidly developed

into one of the mainstream marketing tools. From the initial UGC (user-generated content) mode to the emergence of diversified content production modes such as PGC (professional-generated content) and MCN (multi-channel network) nowadays, the content quality and commercialisation of short-video marketing have been constantly improving[8]. At the same time, with the continuous progress of technology and changes in user demand, short video marketing is also constantly innovating and developing, such as the emergence of new forms of live e-commerce, short video seeding, and other new forms, which further broaden the application scenes and boundaries of short video marketing[9]. Currently, short video marketing has entered a mature stage, not only through rich and diverse forms of content but also through algorithmic recommendations to achieve accurate reach (Zhongyan Puhua Industry Research Institute, 2024). According to the '2024-2029 China Short Video Industry Market Competition Analysis and Development Prospect Forecast Report', the scale of short video users has exceeded the one billion mark, and the market penetration rate is extremely high, covering almost all mobile Internet users. In addition, with the continuous maturation of 5G, AI, and other technologies, short video is accelerating toward intelligence and scenarios, and the market pattern may usher in a new round of change.

2.4. Application of short video marketing in the apparel industry

With the rise of the short video platform, the apparel industry quickly captured the potential of this emerging marketing channel, short video marketing has become an important bridge for brands to communicate with the younger generation of consumers. Through short video marketing, apparel brands can more intuitively display product styles, fabric details, and the effect of models with different body shapes on their bodies, vividly and intuitively presenting the attractiveness of their products to consumers; they can also enhance their brand image and visibility through creative content production, cooperation with KOLs, and personalised recommendations, attracting potential target consumer groups[10].

3. Characteristics of clothing purchasing behaviour of young generation consumers

3.1. Basic Characteristics of Young Generation Consumers

The young generation of consumers mainly refers to the group between the ages of 18 and 30. They are in the most energetic and creative stage of their lives, growing up in the Internet and digital era, and with a higher cultural level, their consumption concepts and behavioural patterns are significantly different from those of traditional consumers. This group has distinctive personality traits and diversified lifestyles[11], they pursue novelty, excitement, and self-expression, and have a keen sense of fashion trends and a strong desire to pursue them. At the same time, they tend to have higher consumption ability and stronger consumption willingness, which is an important consumer group in the apparel market.

The young generation of consumers focuses on self-expression and individuality and tends to pursue unique and novel designs in clothing selection, no longer satisfied with mass and standardised products. They are more inclined to choose clothing brands and styles that can reflect their style and attitude[12], and also pay more attention to product quality and cost-effectiveness, no longer blindly pursuing brands or prices, but paying more attention to the experience and sense of value[13]. At the same time, they pay attention to the convenience and efficiency of the shopping process and tend to choose online shopping channels to enjoy the convenience of browsing products and placing orders at any time and anywhere. They expect fast and reliable logistics services as well as convenient return and exchange policies. The Internet has become the main channel for young consumers to obtain information, socialise and entertain themselves, and shop and consume. They learn about fashion

trends and share shopping experiences through social media platforms, and will be deeply influenced by opinion leaders such as net stars and KOLs.

3.2. The effect of traditional marketing methods and their limitations among the young generation of consumers

With the prevalence of short video marketing, the effect of traditional marketing methods on the younger generation of consumers is gradually showing its limitations. Such as TV ads, newspaper, and magazine ads, outdoor ads, etc., in the past were an important way of brand publicity and marketing and had a far-reaching impact on consumers. However, in the context of the digital and information age, the effect of these traditional marketing methods on the younger generation of consumers gradually weakened.

3.2.1. Weakening effect

With the popularity of the Internet and the change in the way of acquiring information for the younger generation of consumers, it is difficult for traditional marketing methods to effectively reach the target audience. Younger generation consumers are more inclined to obtain information through digital channels such as the Internet, social media, and short video platforms, while traditional media such as TV and newspapers are losing audience and their influence is gradually weakening. As a result, the effectiveness of traditional marketing methods among the younger generation of consumers is greatly reduced, and it is difficult to achieve the expected communication effect and sales conversion.

3.2.2. Outstanding limitations

Insufficient interaction: traditional marketing methods are mostly one-way communication and lack real-time interaction with consumers, making it difficult to attract the attention and interest of the younger generation of consumers. In the context of the prevalence of short video marketing, young consumers are eager to participate in the brand marketing process by commenting, liking, sharing, etc., and it is difficult for traditional marketing methods to meet their interactive needs[14].

Poor precision: traditional marketing methods often difficult to accurately locate the target audience, and it is difficult to quantitatively assess the effect of advertising. Short video marketing, on the other hand, can achieve precise pushing through data analysis, improving marketing efficiency and ROI.

Low cost-effectiveness: With the rising cost of media, traditional marketing methods are under great pressure in terms of cost-effectiveness. For small and medium-sized enterprises with limited capital, traditional marketing methods may be difficult to afford high advertising costs. In contrast, short video marketing has a lower cost threshold and wider audience coverage[15].

4. The Impact of Short Video Marketing on Clothing Purchasing Behaviour of Younger Generation Consumers

4.1. Information acquisition and decision-making process

In the digital era, short video marketing has become an important channel for young consumers to obtain clothing information. This phenomenon is mainly attributed to the highly interactive and visual presentation of short video platforms and the instantaneous dissemination characteristics of the content.

Short video platforms such as TikTok, Kuaishou, and Instagram Reels have quickly captured the attention of young consumers with their short and concise content formats[16]. Through algorithmic recommendation and social dissemination, these platforms enable users to be exposed to a large

amount of clothing information related to their interests in a very short period. Compared with traditional advertising and information channels, short videos provide a more vivid and intuitive visual experience, enabling apparel brands to demonstrate the actual wearing effects, matching techniques, and usage scenarios of their products through creative videos to help consumers better understand the features and benefits of their products[17].

The decision-making process is divided into three main stages. In the awareness stage, short video marketing arouses consumers' interest through engaging content (e.g., fashion collocation, celebrity endorsement, user reviews). The high-frequency exposure and viral spread of short videos help to rapidly increase brand and product awareness. Young consumers usually watch short videos to learn about different brands' styles, product features, and market trends, thus forming initial brand awareness[18]. In the emotional stage, the emotional factors in short videos impact young consumers' purchase decisions. Many brands use short videos to display content that resonates with consumers' emotions, such as trends, lifestyles, and personal stories, which are effective in establishing an emotional connection between brands and consumers. Emotional communication in videos (e.g., happiness, satisfaction) can motivate consumers to feel favorably about the brand, enhancing purchase intention[19]. In the intention stage, short videos can effectively stimulate consumers' desire to buy through promotions, limited-time discounts, and product usage guidelines[20]. Through the 'guided purchase' function of short videos (e.g., jumping directly to the purchase link), brands can simplify the purchase process and reduce consumers' decision-making time. In addition, different users' comments in short videos provide reliable purchase references for other consumers, which can further promote the formation of purchase decisions.

4.2. Brand Awareness and Loyalty Short video marketing plays a significant role in enhancing brand awareness and reputation.

Because of its intuitive and vivid content form, short videos can quickly attract the attention of viewers and enhance brand exposure. By creating creative and interesting short video content, brands can spread rapidly on social platforms, thus increasing brand awareness[21]. In addition, the interactivity and personalised recommendations of short videos strengthen the connection between brands and consumers and enhance brand reputation[22].

In terms of brand loyalty, short video marketing has a particularly significant impact on younger-generation consumers. Brand promotion and product demonstration in short videos usually can quickly stimulate consumers' brand preference and enhance brand identity[23]. However, the maintenance of brand loyalty does not only depend on the initial attraction of short-video marketing but also requires the brand to maintain consistency and sustained value provision over the long term. Brand preference may be enhanced by short-video marketing, but the real formation of brand loyalty needs to be consolidated by consistent quality service and product quality[24]. At the same time, the high frequency of promotion and ever-changing content on short-form video platforms may also lead to an increase in brand switching, so brands will also need to consider how to maintain user loyalty over the long term in their short-form video strategy.

4.3. Social Attributes and Influence

The social attributes of short video marketing are mainly reflected in the interactive features of the platform and user-generated content. Short video platforms such as TikTok and Kuaishou allow users to share and comment on content, and this social interaction makes short videos not only a channel for information dissemination but also a social sharing platform. The influence of this social attribute on younger generation consumers cannot be underestimated, especially in brand communication and product promotion[25].

Research has shown that millennial consumers are more likely to follow content creators and brands they are interested in through short-form video platforms, and these creators often have strong social influence[26]. Social interactions in short videos, such as likes, comments, and shares, can effectively enhance the messaging and exposure of brands and products. The ‘word-of-mouth effect’ on social media makes it easier for consumers to be influenced by the recommendations and evaluations of their peers, which enhances brand recognition and purchase intention[27].

Meanwhile, short video marketing significantly promotes the dissemination and sales of apparel products through social interaction. First, short video platforms provide rich content forms and social features, enabling apparel brands to attract users' attention through creative content and enhance brand exposure through user-generated content and interactive feedback. By collaborating with netizens or opinion leaders, apparel brands leverage their social influence to rapidly increase brand awareness and credibility[21]. Second, the sharing function of the short video platform enables users to easily recommend their favourite clothing products to friends and social circles, and this spontaneous dissemination greatly expands the influence and market coverage of the products. Through users' real wearing display and use evaluation, consumers can feel the actual effect of clothing products more intuitively, thus improving the decision-making efficiency and conversion rate of purchase[28].

5. Application and Challenges of Short Video Marketing in Apparel Industry

5.1. Current Successful Cases Short Video Marketing in the Garment Industry

SHEIN, a clothing brand founded in 2008, will achieve revenue of about \$10 billion in 2020. The U.S. well-known authoritative consulting firm Morning Consult released the ‘top ten fastest-growing brands in the United States,’ the survey report shows that SHEIN is the ‘top ten fastest-growing brands in 2023,’ fourth, with ChatGPT, Zelle, OpenAI, and Facebook[29]. SHEIN is the only Chinese brand to be included in the above list, and it is the only Chinese brand to be included in the above list, through short video marketing with social media celebrities. SHEIN has nearly 100,000 celebrity recommendations worldwide, and cooperates with a large number of head, waist, and tail-level fashion and beauty celebrities, posting content via Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and other social media platforms to show product details, wearing effects, etc. The videos posted by these web celebrities with different levels of followers are pushed to various potential consumer groups, and SHEIN has successfully attracted the attention of a large number of young consumers by utilising the influence of the web celebrities to form a ‘viral’ communication on various social media[30]. At the same time, SHEIN encourages netizens and ordinary users to share their shopping experiences and dressing videos, creating a large amount of user-generated content. These contents not only show the actual effect of the products but also enhance the authenticity and affinity of the brand[29].

For example, a TikTok account named Alice Clothing, live-streams single sales of up to millions of RMB. It creates content through story plots, interpreting real persona and emotional resonance to enhance user stickiness and make users trust the brand. The protagonist in the account wears different clothes of the brand to indirectly attract users to buy products. At the same time, they attract the traffic of short videos into the live broadcasting room to further show the product details, and collocation effect, and answer users’ questions in real-time to increase users’ willingness to buy.

5.2. Challenges and Problems Faced in the Application of Short Video Marketing in the Garment Industry

Content homogenization: with the popularity of short video marketing, content creation among clothing brands gradually tends to be homogenized. Similar wearing tutorials and product demonstration videos flood the platform, making it difficult to attract users' continuous attention and

interest. Content homogenization not only reduces brand differentiation competitiveness but also may lead to a decline in user stickiness[31].

Decline in user stickiness: The information flow nature of short video platforms makes users' attention easily distracted. Brands need to constantly innovate content forms and improve interactivity to maintain users' continuous attention and interest. However, in practice, many brands struggle to maintain the frequency of content updates and the quality of interaction, leading to a gradual decline in user stickiness[32].

Increased Regulatory Risk: With the rise of short video marketing, regulatory risk has increased. Brands need to strictly comply with relevant laws and regulations and platform rules in the process of content creation and live banding to avoid false propaganda, infringement, and other violations. At the same time, the platform side is also strengthening its supervision and cracking down on violations.

5.3. Solutions and suggestions for these challenges

Innovative content forms: Brands should constantly explore new content forms and innovation points to attract users' attention with differentiated content. For example, they can try to create unique short video content by combining fashion trends and cultural elements; or stimulate user participation and interaction through the form of user-generated content (UGC).

Enhance user stickiness: Brands can enhance user stickiness by releasing high-quality content regularly, organizing interactive activities, and setting up a membership system. At the same time, use big data to analyze users' behavioural preferences and purchasing habits, to achieve accurate push and personalized marketing.

Strengthen regulatory compliance: Brands should establish a sound regulatory compliance mechanism to ensure legal compliance in the process of content creation and live banding. Strengthen communication and cooperation with the platform, and keep abreast of platform regulations and regulatory developments; at the same time, conduct strict screening and management of the partners to avoid violations.

Diversified Channel Layout: In addition to short video platforms, brands can also consider laying out marketing resources in other social media, e-commerce platforms, and other diversified channels. Through multi-channel cooperation to expand brand influence and diversify the risk of a single channel.

6. Conclusion and Outlook

By reviewing the full-text content, we can see that short video marketing plays a crucial role in the apparel purchasing behaviour of young generation consumers. With its intuitive, vivid, and interactive features, short video marketing has not only changed the way of information acquisition by young generation consumers but also profoundly influenced their brand cognition, purchase decisions, and consumption experience. Specifically, through creative content production and algorithmic recommendation, short video marketing has achieved accurate reach and rapid dissemination of information, effectively enhancing brand awareness and reputation. At the same time, the emotional factors, promotional activities and user reviews in short videos significantly enhance consumers' purchase desire and brand loyalty. In addition, the social attributes and instant feedback mechanism of short video marketing provide consumers with a more personalised and interesting shopping experience.

Emphasising the importance of short video marketing in the apparel industry, we have reason to believe that its future development trend will be even broader. With the continuous maturity of 5G, AI, and other technologies, short video marketing will become more intelligent and scenario-based, further broadening its application scenarios and boundaries. Future research can further explore the

impact of short video marketing on market segments, such as the differences in preferences and responses of consumers of different genders, ages, and regions to short video marketing. This will help brands develop more accurate and effective marketing strategies to meet the needs of different consumer groups.

At the same time, with the increasing richness of content creation on short video platforms, how to optimise short video marketing strategies to avoid content homogenisation and enhance user stickiness has also become an important direction for future research. In the future, the application of short video marketing in the apparel industry will continue to deepen and develop. First, content innovation will become the key. With the aggravation of users' aesthetic fatigue, apparel brands need to constantly explore novel and interesting content forms to maintain users' continuous attention and interest. Second, technological empowerment will further enhance the effectiveness of short video marketing. Using big data, artificial intelligence, and other technologies, apparel brands can more accurately locate target users and achieve personalised recommendations and precision marketing. The integration of online and offline will become a new trend. Clothing brands will pay more attention to the interaction and integration of online and offline, and achieve omni-channel sales conversion by diverting traffic to offline shops or online malls through short video marketing. For example, through short videos to show the shop environment, preferential activities, and other information, to attract users to the shop experience or online purchase. Brands can enhance the attractiveness and spread of short videos by innovating content forms, strengthening user interaction, and building community culture. In addition, the establishment of a sound regulatory compliance mechanism to protect the legal compliance of content creation and live streaming with goods is also an issue that brands must pay attention to.

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