

The Influence Mechanism and Optimization Strategy of Professional Marketing by KOL on Consumers' Purchasing Decision in Short Video Platform

Minxuan Cheng

*Zhixin High School, Guangzhou, China
cmx201009@outlook.com*

Abstract. This study focuses on the influence mechanism and optimization strategies of KOL professional marketing on consumers' purchasing decisions in short-video platforms. In recent years, short-video platforms have rapidly accumulated a massive user base due to their visual content, social attributes, and convenient content-creation models, making KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) an indispensable partner for corporate digital marketing. Theoretically, this research sorts out core concepts such as KOLs, purchase intention, and brand loyalty. Empirically, a comparative analysis of multiple studies reveals that KOLs' professional knowledge output significantly enhances consumers' understanding and trust in product information, especially in high-integration product fields like educational courses and health services. Their professional expression indirectly promotes the transformation of purchase intention by enhancing the perceived value of functional, emotional, and social aspects. Additionally, KOLs strengthen consumers' brand loyalty by delivering brand values and establishing emotional connections through long-term content output, while excessive commercialization or lack of professionalism may lead to trust loss. The study suggests that enterprises should establish a scientific KOL professional evaluation system, focus on content knowledge density and brand tone matching; platforms should optimize recommendation algorithms to highlight professional content weight; brands should formulate differentiated marketing strategies for user segmentation. Future research can explore the performance of virtual KOLs in professional marketing and the reshaping mechanism of platform algorithms on marketing effects. This study provides bidirectional references for enriching the theoretical framework of KOL marketing and corporate practice.

Keywords: KOL professional marketing, purchase intention, brand loyalty, short-video platforms, content professionalism

1. Introduction

Research Background: In recent years, short video platforms have rapidly attracted a large user base thanks to their rich visual content, strong social features, and convenient content creation methods. As social media continues to evolve, China's short video platforms (such as TikTok and Kuaishou) have provided broader channels and more opportunities for corporate product marketing. Opinion

leaders (KOLs), individuals with a significant fan base and high credibility and influence, have become an indispensable partner in corporate digital marketing. By leveraging the authority of KOLs in their professional fields and the loyalty of their fan base, companies can more precisely target their audience with product information, thereby influencing consumer purchasing decisions [1].

Currently, companies are increasingly allocating their marketing budgets to KOL marketing on short video platforms to boost brand awareness and drive sales growth. However, in practice, some KOL marketing campaigns have failed to meet expectations. For instance, when KOL personas do not align with the brand's tone, or when content lacks authenticity or becomes overly commercialized, these issues can lead to a decline in consumer trust and lower conversion rates [2]. These problems highlight the need to explore how the professionalism of KOLs influences consumer purchasing decisions and to propose practical optimization strategies to enhance marketing efficiency and actual conversions.

Regarding the significance of this research, theoretically, it enriches and refines the theoretical framework related to KOL marketing and consumer purchasing decisions [3]. It further advances academic research in this field, offering new perspectives and pathways for future scholars. Practically, the findings provide practical guidance for companies and brands conducting KOL marketing activities on short video platforms, including helping businesses accurately target their audience, scientifically select KOLs, and develop effective marketing strategies [4].

2. Introduction of key concepts

This study focuses on the influence of KOL professional marketing on consumers' purchase decisions on short video platforms, and involves core concepts such as KOL, purchase intention and brand loyalty, which need to be clearly defined in the theoretical level.

2.1. Introduction to the concept of KOL

Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) are individuals with professional backgrounds, strong information dissemination capabilities, and significant influence in their fields. Their views carry high credibility among specific audiences [5]. On short video platforms, KOLs build personal brands through content creation, and their professionalism is crucial for enhancing audience trust and guiding consumption. Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, KOLs focus on building audience loyalty through their personal experiences, professional insights, and platform interactions, forming an effective marketing loop. In KOL marketing, professional skills often determine the credibility of the recommended content and its acceptance by the audience, significantly influencing consumer purchasing decisions and behavior tendencies [1,2].

2.2. Introduction to the concept of purchase intention

The willingness to purchase is the latent buying inclination that arises in consumers after being stimulated by external marketing. This is a key psychological variable linking cognition and behavior, influenced by factors such as the credibility of the information source, brand recognition, and usage expectations [6]. In the context of short video marketing, KOLs effectively reduce consumer uncertainty about product information through demonstrations, explanations of features, and contextual recommendations, thereby stimulating the desire to buy [4,5]. Especially when KOLs

are highly professional, the information they convey is more likely to be accepted and transformed by consumers, leading to a psychological shift from attention and interest to action [4,5].

2.3. Introduction to the concept of brand loyalty

Brand loyalty refers to the sustained purchasing preference and emotional connection that consumers develop towards a specific brand, serving as a key indicator of brand equity and marketing performance [7]. In the context of KOL marketing, professional KOLs can foster emotional attachment and trust in the brand through consistent content creation, in-depth product analysis, and the promotion of brand philosophy. This influence often extends from product awareness to a shared brand culture, ultimately building brand loyalty [8,9].

3. KOL's influence on consumers' purchase intention

With the rapid rise of short video platforms, KOLs are increasingly influencing consumer purchasing behavior. Research indicates that KOLs can significantly enhance consumers' product awareness and trust through their expertise and credibility in specialized fields, thereby stimulating purchasing motivation [10]. In the short video environment, users tend to favor content that is frequent, visual, and social-like, making the "professionalism" of KOLs a key differentiator from other marketing strategies.

3.1. Detailed description of studies

Research conclusions and comparison with other studies: The research findings indicate that the professional knowledge demonstrated by KOLs in video content significantly enhances the audience's understanding of product features and boosts their purchasing confidence [1]. This is particularly true for high-integration products, such as educational courses and health services. This finding aligns with Abhilash et al.'s assertion that "knowledge-based KOLs are more effective in complex decision-making scenarios" and supports Hasan et al.'s research on how localized KOLs can enhance resonance [11,12].

Research conclusions and comparison with other studies: Research has shown that the professional expression of KOLs significantly influences users' judgments on information credibility. By enhancing users' perceived value of products, including functional, emotional, and social aspects, it indirectly boosts their willingness to purchase [5]. This model further develops Liu Q's linear relationship, forming a more comprehensive chain of influence.

3.2. Summary analysis

By comparing the two studies, it is evident that the professionalism of KOLs significantly boosts users' understanding and trust in product information [1,5]. The key distinction between professional KOLs and ordinary entertainment bloggers lies in the density of knowledge and logical structure in their content output. The "credibility" conveyed by these professionals becomes a core factor in driving users' purchasing decisions [2].

3.3. Brief description of other studies

Abhilash et al. noted that the authenticity and professionalism of KOLs can enhance consumers' emotional connection and trust [11]. Hasan et al. found that local KOLs have a greater impact on

consumer decision-making [12]. Sharma et al. highlighted that KOLs' professional responses significantly boost users' overall satisfaction with brands and their willingness to purchase [2].

4. The influence of KOL on consumer brand loyalty

On short video platforms, KOL marketing is not just about driving one-time purchases; it also plays a deeper role in influencing consumers' brand attitudes and emotional connections through long-term content engagement, thereby enhancing brand loyalty [10]. Brand loyalty is not only reflected in repeat purchases but also in consumers' acceptance and promotion of the brand culture [7].

4.1. Detailed description of studies

Research conclusions and comparison with other studies: Research indicates that the professionalism and continuity of KOL content on short video platforms are key factors in guiding consumers from "action" to "sharing" [8]. This finding aligns with Guo Fang's emphasis on the emotional recognition pathway and corroborates Sirola Davor et al.'s research [9,13].

Research conclusions and comparison with other studies: The study indicates that KOLs can foster an emotional connection between users and brands through their emotional expression and value transmission [9]. This finding echoes Wang Yedi et al.'s warning about the negative effects of emotional marketing [6]. After categorizing KOLs, it was found that emotion-evoking KOLs excel in enhancing emotional resonance, while knowledge-based KOLs play a more significant role in building brand trust [9].

4.2. Brief description of other studies

Sirola Davor et al. noted that KOLs who use emotional cues are more likely to enhance brand loyalty [13]. Peng Yuru highlighted that excessive marketing by KOLs can lead to "consumer burnout" [10]. Wang Yedi et al. stated that users may experience regret and trust loss if they feel manipulated [6].

4.3. Summary and research implications

In summary, the role of KOLs in enhancing brand loyalty is primarily reflected in three aspects: value delivery, emotional connection, and social spread [9,13]. However, if KOLs lack professionalism or the content is overly commercialized, it can have a negative impact on the brand [10].

5. Discussion and suggestions

5.1. Summarize the overall conclusions of the current study

Based on the aforementioned research findings, it is evident that the professionalism of KOLs significantly influences consumers' purchasing intentions and brand loyalty [1,5,8,9]. This influence is affected by multiple external factors, such as the tone match between KOLs and brands, the objectivity of the content, and the platform's dissemination mechanisms [2,4].

5.2. Propose recommendations based on conclusions

In corporate practice, it is essential to establish a scientific KOL professional evaluation system, incorporating dimensions such as content structure and knowledge background [2]. Content design should emphasize knowledge and practicality [4]. Short video platforms should increase the weight of professionalism in recommendation algorithms [5]. Brands should tailor KOL marketing strategies to different user segments [6,10].

5.3. Future research direction

Future research can explore the performance of virtual KOLs in professional marketing [7]. Current research could also consider incorporating platform recommendation algorithms to examine their role in reshaping marketing effects [3,5].

6. Conclusion

This study focuses on the mechanisms and optimization strategies of KOLs' professional marketing on short video platforms. KOLs influence consumers' purchasing intentions and brand loyalty through content creation. The effectiveness of these effects is moderated by factors such as KOL-brand tone alignment and content objectivity. It is recommended that companies establish a KOL evaluation system and optimize content design. Future research could explore virtual KOLs and platform algorithms.

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