

Research on the Current Situation and Transformation of Enterprise Marketing Strategies Against the Background of Customs Closure of Hainan Free Trade Port

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Abstract. As a landmark measure of China's institutional opening-up, the customs closure operation of Hainan Free Trade Port has formed a market ecology and competition pattern different from the Chinese mainland by building a special institutional system of "first-line liberalization and second-line control". The original marketing models of enterprises, built on the rules of the unified domestic market, have encountered adaptive difficulties. Promoting the systematic transformation of marketing strategies has become the key for enterprises to grasp policy dividends and cope with market competition. By reducing institutional transaction costs, expanding market openness and driving the upgrading of consumer demand, the customs closure policy not only brings enterprises development opportunities such as cost optimization, market expansion and international layout, but also exposes enterprises to practical challenges including internationalized competition, transformed consumer demand and insufficient policy adaptability. Enterprises need to adapt to changes in the institutional environment and carry out systematic transformation of marketing strategies in terms of product brand upgrading, refined pricing mechanisms, full-scenario channel integration, and digital and cross-cultural adaptation of promotion and communication. Such transformation is not an adjustment of a single element, but a systematic project involving strategic positioning, resource allocation and organizational capabilities. Enterprises should regard the customs closure policy as a long-term opportunity for marketing innovation, so as to gain sustainable competitive advantages in open competition.

Keywords: Hainan Free Trade Port, marketing, strategic transformation, institutional opening-up

1. Introduction

1.1. Research background and problem statement

Against the background of in-depth adjustment of the global economic and trade pattern and accelerated reconstruction of international economic and trade rules, countries have improved their competitive position in the international division of labor system through institutional innovation. As

one of the open forms with the highest level of openness and the strongest policy integration, free trade ports have become an important institutional carrier for promoting high-level opening-up. Hainan Free Trade Port is a major exploration for China to advance institutional opening-up in the new era. Among its supporting measures, the whole-island customs closure operation is regarded as a key link for the implementation of the free trade port system, and its rollout will exert far-reaching influence on the regional market environment and enterprise operation behavior.

The customs closure operation indicates that Hainan has established institutional arrangements different from the Chinese mainland in terms of goods trade, taxation system and market access. As a result, the external environment faced by enterprises has shifted from the relatively unified and stable rules of China's domestic market to a more open institutional model with international competitive features. In this context, the marketing strategies that enterprises previously built with China's domestic market as the core have met adaptive challenges in many aspects such as product positioning, price mechanism, channel layout and promotion methods. How to realize systematic adjustment and transformation of marketing strategies under the background of customs closure has become a pressing practical problem for enterprises to solve.

1.2. Research significance and objectives

Theoretically, current marketing research focuses more on internal resource allocation of enterprises or general macroeconomic fluctuations, and pays relatively little attention to the special institutional variable of institutional opening-up. Taking the customs closure of Hainan Free Trade Port as the research context can help us better understand the impact of institutional environment changes on the mechanism of enterprise marketing behavior, and thus broaden the research perspective of marketing theory.

Practically, Hainan's customs closure policy brings huge policy dividends and institutional space to enterprises. However, whether policy dividends can be converted into actual competitive advantages depends on the adjustment capacity of enterprises' marketing strategies. A systematic analysis of market environment changes and the transformation path of enterprise marketing strategies under the background of customs closure can provide practical and guiding references for enterprise practice.

2. Customs closure policy and market environment of Hainan Free Trade Port

2.1. Institutional connotation of customs closure operation of Hainan Free Trade Port

The customs closure operation of Hainan Free Trade Port is not a simple "closure" in the general sense, but a special customs supervision system implemented across the whole island. According to the *Overall Plan for the Construction of Hainan Free Trade Port*, after customs closure, Hainan implements "first-line liberalization" for external connections and "second-line control" for links with the inland, forming institutional separation from the mainland market in terms of goods entry and exit, taxation policies and supervision methods. After customs closure, eligible commodities will enjoy zero or low tariff policies, which are also matched with preferential corporate income tax and individual income tax as well as investment freedom and facilitation policies. This policy system centered on institutional innovation endows Hainan with market functions similar to those of international free ports to a certain extent, and provides a higher-level open environment for business activities [1].

2.2. Analysis of the impact of customs closure policy on the market environment

The impact of customs closure operation on Hainan's market environment mainly concentrates on three aspects. First, the structure of market competition entities has changed. With the reduction of tariff barriers and the relaxation of access thresholds, international brands and export-oriented enterprises have significantly stronger willingness to enter the Hainan market, making market competition shift from a relatively closed state to a highly open one. Second, the structure of consumer demand has changed. Many studies show that the customs closure policy helps promote the return of international consumption and drives Hainan to transform from a tourism-oriented consumer market to a comprehensive and international consumption center. Third, the industrial and channel structures have changed. The facilitation of cross-border trade and improved logistics efficiency have laid a practical foundation for enterprises to build diversified marketing channels [2].

These changes together reshape the external constraints on enterprise marketing decision-making, making it necessary for enterprises to redesign their marketing strategies from a more open and competitive perspective.

3. New opportunities and challenges for enterprise marketing under the background of customs closure

3.1. New marketing opportunities brought by customs closure policy

The zero-tariff and low-tariff policy system implemented by the customs closure operation of Hainan Free Trade Port has significantly reduced institutional transaction costs of enterprises in key links such as cross-border procurement of raw materials and import customs clearance of goods at the institutional level. This optimization of cost structure provides core support for the adjustment of enterprises' marketing strategies. From the perspective of marketing, the rigid decline in costs not only enhances enterprises' decision-making flexibility in product pricing, but also creates conditions for reasonable distribution of profit space and value reconstruction. Enterprises can either expand their market share in the mass market by building price competitive advantages, or invest the cost savings in product research and development and quality upgrading to strengthen market competitiveness by increasing product added value.

The improved trade facilitation and optimized duty-free policies brought by the customs closure policy have effectively boosted the return of international consumption, prompting the Hainan market to transform from a traditional tourism-oriented consumption scenario to a comprehensive and international consumption center. Studies show that after the implementation of customs closure-related policies, the consumption level of the Hainan market has kept rising, and high-end and quality-oriented consumer demand has shown a notable growth trend. This upgrading of the market demand structure not only expands a broader market space for enterprises, but also creates a key opportunity for high-end product market penetration and brand value upgrading. Enterprises can take advantage of this change in the market environment to step up the promotion of high-end product lines, realize the transformation from traditional product marketing to brand value marketing, and further improve the recognition and influence of brands in both domestic and foreign markets [3].

The institutional opening-up environment constructed by the customs closure operation has built a marketing institutional platform for enterprises to connect the domestic and international dual circulations. After customs closure, with its unique geographical and institutional advantages,

Hainan has gradually become a key hub linking China's domestic circulation and international circulation, providing a natural carrier for enterprises to carry out cross-border marketing pilots and explore international operation paths. Enterprises can rely on Hainan's policy dividends and market hub function to conduct exploration and practice in brand international communication, cross-border channel layout, international market resource integration and other aspects. By accumulating cross-border marketing experience and adapting to international market rules, enterprises can gradually improve their international operation capacity and global market competitiveness, laying a solid foundation for long-term international market expansion.

3.2. Main challenges faced by enterprise marketing

The improved market openness brought by the customs closure policy has directly broken the existing competitive equilibrium of the Hainan market and triggered an in-depth reconstruction of the market competition pattern. With the reduction of tariff barriers and the relaxation of market access thresholds, internationally renowned brands, multinational enterprises and export-oriented local enterprises have all accelerated their layout in the Hainan market, making market competition entities present diversified and international characteristics. This change in the competition pattern has not only intensified the scramble for product markets, channel resources and consumer groups, but also put forward higher requirements for the professional marketing level of enterprises. If enterprises fail to improve their core capabilities such as marketing strategic planning, market insight and brand operation in a timely manner, they will easily be marginalized by the market under the dual pressure of homogeneous competition and high-end competition, and lose their existing market share.

The international transformation of the consumer market after customs closure has driven fundamental changes in the structure of consumer demand. The consumption decision-making logic dominated by tourist consumers has shifted to quality-oriented, experience-oriented and value-oriented patterns, putting forward higher requirements for the core quality of products, brand cultural connotation, consumption scenario experience and other aspects [4]. The traditional marketing model that relies on price advantages or single channel coverage can hardly adapt to this trend of consumer demand change. In this context, if enterprises lack accurate judgment on the demand characteristics of target consumer groups and fail to adjust the core marketing appeals and service system in time, it will easily lead to a mismatch between marketing strategic positioning and the demands of target consumer groups, thus affecting marketing effects and market competitiveness.

Some enterprises have obvious shortcomings in their adaptability to the customs closure policy, which has become a key bottleneck restricting the transformation of their marketing strategies. At present, many enterprises' understanding of the institutional connotation, implementation path and market transmission mechanism of the customs closure policy mostly stays at the macro cognitive level, lacking in-depth analysis of policy details, implementation effects and industry impacts. More prominently, enterprises generally have not yet formed a systematic ability to convert policy dividends into practical marketing plans. They lack clear paths on key issues such as how to optimize product structure relying on tariff preferences, how to expand marketing channels with the help of market opening, and how to adjust brand strategies in line with consumption upgrading. As a result, policy advantages are difficult to be effectively transformed into enterprises' market competitive advantages, hindering the smooth progress of marketing strategy transformation.

4. Analysis on the transformation path of enterprise marketing strategies under the background of Hainan customs closure

4.1. Transformation direction of product and brand strategies

The international reconstruction of market competition after customs closure requires enterprises to take the systematic upgrading of the product system as the core support for marketing transformation. Enterprises need to break the limitations of the traditional product structure and carry out optimization and adjustment of the whole product line with international market access standards and technical specifications as the core reference. For core products, enterprises should increase R&D investment, focus on technological innovation and quality improvement, narrow the gap with international competitors in core performance, process design and other aspects, and build quantifiable and comparable quality competitiveness. At the same time, enterprises should actively connect with authoritative international certification systems such as ISO and CE, introduce advanced quality management models, ensure that products meet international prevailing standards in safety, environmental protection and performance, and remove obstacles for entering high-end markets at home and abroad.

Strengthening brand building is an important means to improve the popularity of Hainan's cultural tourism, and the in-depth shaping of brand value has become the key for enterprises to stand out in open competition. In a market environment with intensified product homogeneity, single functional appeals can hardly maintain long-term consumer recognition, and enterprises need to turn to the in-depth excavation of emotional value and cultural connotation. Brand positioning should form synergistic empowerment with Hainan's regional characteristics and the image of the free trade port. The core positioning of Hainan Free Trade Port as "open, innovative and international", as well as its regional endowments such as tropical tourism, marine economy and ecological resources, promotes the sustainable development of coastal leisure tourism and provides unique value anchors for enterprise brand positioning. Enterprises can combine their own industrial attributes and deeply bind regional characteristic resources. For example, cultural tourism enterprises can build "immersive cultural tourism brands of the free trade port", and agricultural product enterprises can build "ecological agricultural product brands of the free trade port" relying on Hainan's tropical agricultural resources. This positioning method of deeply integrating enterprise brands with regional images can not only help enterprises quickly establish unique recognition in diversified competition, but also amplify the brand effect with the international influence of the free trade port, realizing the symbiotic development of enterprise brands and regional brands.

4.2. Optimization and adjustment of pricing and channel strategies

The cost structure change brought by the customs closure policy drives enterprises to build a dynamic and refined pricing system. Enterprises need to get rid of the traditional cost-based pricing model and establish a dynamic pricing model covering the three dimensions of cost, demand and competition. In terms of cost, it is necessary to accurately calculate the cost dividends brought by the zero-tariff policy in raw material procurement and product import, and dynamically adjust the cost bottom line in combination with variables such as cross-border logistics costs, supply chain losses and compliance costs. In terms of demand, by analyzing the demand elasticity of segmented markets, differentiated pricing strategies are formulated for different customer groups such as high-end consumers, mass consumers and cross-border consumers. In terms of competition, closely track

the pricing dynamics of international brands and local competitors, and flexibly adjust the price range to avoid low-price vicious competition while maintaining market competitiveness.

The optimization of channel strategies should focus on omni-channel integration and resource coordination. The maturity of cross-border e-commerce and the improvement of modern logistics networks after customs closure provide practical support for enterprises to break the limitations of single channels. Enterprises should promote the in-depth integration of online and offline channels. Offline stores can focus on immersive experience and instant service functions, and set up product display areas and interactive experience areas to meet consumers' on-site perception needs. Online platforms, on the other hand, undertake roles such as product display, order processing, user interaction and after-sales service, and achieve accurate reach with the help of algorithm recommendation. At the same time, break down online and offline data barriers, realize inventory sharing, intercommunication of membership systems and unified service standards, and improve operation efficiency and consumer shopping experience through channel collaboration [5].

The layout of international channels is an important path for enterprises to expand the global market. Relying on the institutional advantages of "first-line liberalization and second-line control" of Hainan Free Trade Port, enterprises should actively build a dual-circulation channel network for domestic and international markets. On the one hand, establish in-depth cooperation with cross-border e-commerce platforms such as Amazon, AliExpress and Shopee, as well as large overseas distribution systems, and quickly enter international markets such as Southeast Asia, Europe and the United States with their mature traffic resources, logistics networks and localized service capabilities. On the other hand, participate in cross-border marketing pilot projects of the free trade port, explore models such as overseas direct procurement, overseas warehouse layout and construction of overseas exhibition centers, and accumulate experience in international channel operation. At the same time, optimize channel service processes according to the market rules and consumption habits of different countries and regions, improve the international adaptation capacity of payment and settlement, logistics distribution and after-sales service, and gradually build a stable and efficient international marketing channel [6].

4.3. Innovation path of promotion and communication strategies

Digital transformation is the core direction for enterprises to improve promotion efficiency under the background of customs closure. Enterprises need to strengthen the construction of digital marketing capabilities and build a full-process digital marketing system covering data collection, analysis and application. Integrate multi-dimensional information such as online and offline consumption behavior data, social interaction data and search data to build accurate user portraits, and clarify the consumption preferences, behavior habits and media contact characteristics of target customer groups. On this basis, with the help of AI algorithms, realize personalized push and precise delivery of marketing content, focus on core digital scenarios such as short video platforms, social e-commerce, live streaming e-commerce and private domain traffic, create content forms adapted to different platforms, and improve the accuracy and effectiveness of marketing reach. At the same time, use digital tools to monitor marketing effects in real time, dynamically adjust communication strategies, optimize marketing resource allocation and reduce customer acquisition costs.

The in-depth integration of experiential marketing and content marketing has become a key path to strengthen brand stickiness. As consumer demand shifts to experience-oriented and value-oriented patterns, the traditional one-way communication model can no longer meet the demand. Enterprises should build an immersive experiential marketing system, allowing consumers to deeply perceive brand value and product advantages through scenario-based construction and interactive

participation. For example, create themed experience spaces in offline stores, and use VR/AR technology to restore product usage scenarios; hold brand salons, product tasting meetings, user co-creation activities and so on, invite consumers to participate in product R&D, brand communication and other links, and enhance users' sense of participation and belonging. At the same time, take high-quality content as the core carrier to convey brand culture and product stories, and trigger emotional resonance of consumers through various forms such as pictures and texts, short videos and documentaries, so as to realize the effective transmission of brand value.

The improvement of cross-cultural communication capacity is an important guarantee for enterprises to expand the international market. The layout of the international market requires enterprises to break through cultural barriers and realize the effective transmission of brand information. Enterprises should conduct in-depth research on the cultural customs, values, consumption psychology and communication preferences of target markets, and optimize communication content and forms accordingly. In content creation, integrate cultural elements, language expressions and visual symbols of the target market to avoid cultural conflicts. In terms of communication channels, cooperate with local KOLs, media platforms and industry associations, and expand brand exposure with their local influence. In terms of communication mechanism, establish a cross-cultural communication feedback system, collect real-time feedback from consumers in target markets, and dynamically adjust communication strategies. Through the balance of localization and internationalization, improve the cultural adaptability and influence of brands in the international market, and promote the process of brand internationalization [7].

5. Conclusion

Taking the customs closure operation of Hainan Free Trade Port as the research background, this paper systematically analyzes the impact of institutional opening-up on the market environment and enterprise marketing strategies. The study holds that the customs closure policy has exerted a significant impact on the traditional marketing model of enterprises by reducing institutional transaction costs, expanding market openness and reshaping the competition pattern. Only by adapting to changes in the institutional environment and making systematic adjustments in products, prices, channels and promotion can enterprises gain sustainable competitive advantages in an open competitive environment.

At the same time, the study shows that the transformation of marketing strategies is not an adjustment of a single element, but a systematic project involving strategic positioning, resource allocation and organizational capabilities. Enterprises should regard the customs closure policy as an important opportunity to promote marketing innovation, rather than a short-term policy dividend.

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