



The Dilemma and Relief of the Marketing Path of ‘Short Video + Direct Broadcast’ in Publishing Industry

—A Case Study Based on Douyin APP Publisher Account

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Abstract. After the epidemic situation, the marketing mode of ‘short video + live broadcast’ is gradually rising in the publishing industry, but the effect of account operation is polarized seriously, there is obvious Matthew effect, and it also faces many difficulties in practical operation, such as single marketing strategy, insufficient interaction and so on, which leads to poor marketing effect. Through empirical research, this paper deeply analyzes the present situation and predicament of ‘short video + live broadcast’ marketing on Douyin APP, probes into the new mode of ‘piecewise push book’ combined with empathy communication mechanism, and puts forward the corresponding relief strategies. The research holds that publishing institutions should strengthen the anchoring of book editors, be good at making use of the spontaneous emotional resonance of users, and accurately locate the psychology and needs of the audience in order to adapt to the development of the new media era.

Keywords: digital publishing, marketing, short video, live broadcast.

1 Introduction

In recent years, with the deepening of the new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial reform, the social content production and distribution mode has gradually realized multiple rounds of reconstruction, and the user information reception mode has shown a diversified development trend. As a new media form in the Internet era, short video has the characteristics of personalized reading mode, huge user group and increasingly mature operation mode, which provides a rich soil for the industry to promote the digital transformation and integration development. In March 2020, Anhui Children's Publishing House's ‘Chinese Classical Animation Collection Edition’ appeared as a popular anchor studio, in just a few minutes on the sale of more than 30, 000 sets of more than 5 million yuan when the popular anchor participated in the ‘fancy marketing’ strategy for book sales opened a new situation ¹, behind such a huge amount, consumers' purchase potential and willingness can be seen ².

Today's publishing industry is trending towards user-centricity and blurring the lines between professional and amateur content. The ease of user participation has

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increased, and the collaboration between businesses and users is based on shared values, with a focus on user identity. This applies to marketing as well, where the impact of personal media on book promotion via short videos and social sharing is significant, highlighting the growing importance of unofficial marketing channels³.

2 The Present Situation of the Practice of ‘Short Video + Direct Broadcast’ Marketing in Publishing Industry

2.1 Four Main Marketing Models of ‘Live Broadcast + Short Video’

On the one hand, take the author as the anchor, carry on the creative live broadcast or the new book release activity related to the book content, carry on the propaganda for the book. The people's Literature Publishing House, called the Train to Childhood, is used to promote Zhang Yueran's new book, Cocoon, with 250000 participants. Zhang Yueran, the author, took the train, along the way, she took netizens to enjoy the beautiful scenery along the way, shared with you some unforgettable experiences when she created the Cocoon, and answered the questions that netizens were interested in. In addition, the live broadcast also entered Zhang Yueran's study, so that readers can more intuitively understand the author's writing environment. Similar live activities can narrow the distance between the author and the reader and enhance the enthusiasm of the reader to buy books.

On the other hand, the internal editor and publisher of the publishing house, the bookstore ‘with goods’ live broadcast. Many publishing houses and bookstores have seen the driving force of live broadcast on marketing, and have begun to create ‘Li Jiaqi’ in the society, and some bookstores have asked all front-line employees of all stores to open Douyin to promote book products⁴.

2.2 Empirical Research: a Comparison of Short Video Marketing Logic Based on Different Types of Account Subjects

The number of fans is an important embodiment of Douyin account activity⁵, which directly reflects the effectiveness of the account operation strategy. In this paper, the octopus crawler technology is used to crawl the data, collect the number of fans, the total number of works, the number of praise and other indicators, and arrange the list of publishing and distribution organizations according to the number of Douyin fans. According to the Figure 1 below, the account subject is classified, and the short video content and marketing effect of different account subjects are analyzed according to the category.

Ranking	Douyin sign	Total number of works	Number of praise Total (10,000)	Cumulative number of fans (ten thousand people)
1	Books selected from the East	2297	20000	414.5
2	People's Daily Publishing House	1424	154.7	350.7
3	Xiao Xuanniang tells a book	644	3120.5	219.8
4	An iron bookshelf	7557	8100	201.2
5	Shangzhi astronomy	426	2387.4	185.8
6	Learn and think about the official flagship store	187	219.3	184.4
7	Star education	1441	3135.8	117.7
8	Wanwei Middle School entrance examination	2297	1277.8	89.5
9	Xinhua Publishing House	2518	358.2	6.7

Fig. 1. Account information summary table of some publishing houses in Douyin(The table above summarizes the data collected by the author)

As can be seen from the Fig.1 above, from the point of view of the distribution of account subjects, 'People's Daily Publishing House' and 'Xinhua Publishing House' belong to publishing houses, 'Star Education' and 'learning and thinking about the official flagship store' belong to book companies, and 'Oriental selected books' belong to book companies.

In the publishing industry, companies like "Star Education" and "Wanwei Middle School Entrance Examination" prioritize frequent updates and promotional tactics over in-depth content, using short videos as a marketing tool to maintain visibility and cater to various user groups with specialized sub-accounts⁶. Meanwhile, individual accounts, exemplified by "Shangzhi Astronomical" and "Little Xuan Night Story," achieve higher user engagement through high-quality video content, particularly "Little Xuan Night Story," which excels with its suspenseful narratives, outperforming institutional accounts in terms of viewer interaction.

3 The Paradox of MCNization and the Matthew Effect in Publishing Industry

MCN refers to the Internet publishing organization, which incubates packaging anchors by various means, was once keen to cooperate with the head anchors of MCN, hoping to realize the large-scale sale of books with the help of KOL such as Wang Fang, Liu Yuanyuan and Zhang Dandan⁷.

Live streaming has become a powerful tool for publishers to reach new audiences and boost sales. However, the success of a live broadcast is not a given; it requires a well-thought-out strategy that is tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of the publisher and their target audience. Despite the importance of such strategies, many publishers find themselves at a disadvantage due to the lack of a dedicated online marketing team.

This lack of in-house expertise often leads publishers to seek assistance from Multi-Channel Networks (MCNs), which are companies that provide a range of services to help content creators grow their audiences and monetize their content. While MCNs can be beneficial, they come with a high cost. Publishers may find themselves in a situation where, although they are achieving high sales volumes through live broadcasts facilitated by MCNs, their profits are disappointingly low due to the substantial fees charged by these networks.

Moreover, the staff within publishers' organizations who are tasked with managing live broadcasts often struggle to make the most of the resources at their disposal. This can be attributed to a lack of expertise in key areas such as scene selection and content planning. Effective online marketing requires a deep understanding of what engages viewers and keeps them interested throughout the broadcast. Without this knowledge, publishers may find it difficult to create compelling content that resonates with their audience. Scene selection is crucial because it sets the tone and atmosphere for the live broadcast. A well-chosen scene can enhance the viewer's experience, making the content more immersive and memorable. On the other hand, a poorly selected scene can detract from the message the publisher is trying to convey and may even alienate potential customers.

Content planning is equally important. It involves the strategic organization of the topics, messages, and calls to action that will be presented during the live broadcast. A well-planned content strategy ensures that the broadcast flows smoothly, maintains viewer interest, and effectively communicates the publisher's value proposition. To overcome these challenges, publishers need to invest in building their online marketing capabilities. This could involve hiring experienced marketing professionals, training existing staff, or partnering with marketing consultants who can provide guidance and support. Additionally, publishers should consider leveraging data analytics to better understand their audience and tailor their live broadcast content accordingly. By developing a robust online marketing strategy and enhancing their in-house expertise, publishers can reduce their reliance on costly MCNs and improve their profitability from live broadcasts. This will enable them to create more engaging and effective online marketing campaigns that resonate with their audience and drive sustainable growth for their business⁷.

Combined with data collection and data analysis, the head private book companies and channel companies have significant advantages, in the number of short video interaction, fan size, self-broadcast sales and other aspects of better results, traditional publishing institutions still have a lot of room for improvement. The monitoring found that although the mechanical industry publishing house, Zhejiang literature and art publishing house and so on, has started the journey of self-broadcasting and carrying goods, but the average sales volume is about 10,000 yuan, which is in sharp contrast with the sales of iron and iron bookshelves and other accounts with an average of about 100,000 yuan⁸.

4 Engaging the Participatory Culture: Empathy-Driven Book Marketing in the Digital Era

The Internet has transformed consumer culture by empowering users, who now play a central role in the publishing industry's competitive framework, complementing innovation, resource integration, and marketing. As user numbers grow, so does the value of Internet products—a concept known as network externality. Users have evolved from passive consumers to active co-creators of value, working in tandem with publishers and fellow users⁹.

Yu Hua's "The Seventh Day"¹⁰ gained widespread attention due to a poignant passage that sparked a "ringing the doorbell" trend on Douyin, significantly boosting the readership of his works. The trend was propelled by influencer "Huihuo Star," whose empathetic post demonstrated the power of relatable and concise language in capturing digital audiences¹¹.

5 Conclusions

In the era of 'short video + live broadcast', publishers must enhance editorial anchoring, engage with real-time communication trends, and leverage audience emotional resonance to target audience needs effectively. This approach aims to elevate the quality of short video promotions and counteract the Matthew effect in book live streaming. Publishers should also craft distinct operational strategies that reflect their professional strengths and brand identity, ensuring content is tailored to the characteristics and advantages of different publishing units. Strengthening user interaction and promptly addressing feedback are crucial for creating an operational loop that boosts engagement and supports data-driven content distribution. These strategies are essential for traditional publishers to thrive in the short video era and amplify their brand value and impact.

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