

Analysis of the Sales of Surplus Food Blind Box

Yawen Pu^{1,a,*}

¹*Suzhou North American High School, Suzhou, Jiangsu, China, 215000*

a. 15850203707@163.com

**corresponding author*

Abstract: With the improvement of living standards, people have higher and higher requirements for food quality and health. However, the global problem of surplus food is becoming increasingly prominent, especially in China, where a staggering amount of foodstuffs are wasted every year. As a new consumption mode, the surplus food blind box can not only reduce waste, save costs, but also meet the needs of consumers, but how to open new sales ideas is still a problem that needs to be discussed. This paper aims to explore a new idea of how to open the surplus food blind box through diversified product portfolios, social media marketing, online and offline combination and other ways. With the increasing concern of people on environmental protection, surplus food and healthy living, the surplus food blind box has a broad market prospect as a consumption way to use leftover ingredients. In this context, this paper puts forward some innovative sales ideas, including the combination of different flavors of surplus food blind boxes, the combination of online and offline sales models, social media marketing strategies, etc., to meet the needs of different consumers and improve sales and brand influence.

Keywords: surplus food blind box, sales analysis, diversified product portfolio, consumer behavior, social media marketing

1. Introduction

As an innovative sales model, surplus food blind box has emerged in the catering industry in recent years. The surplus food blind box has attracted more and more consumers' attention and participation with its unique blind box form and low-price sales. By packaging and selling surplus food in the catering industry, the sales model not only solves the problem of surplus food, but also brings benefits and fun to consumers. However, the success of the surplus food blind box is closely related to the marketing strategy. This paper explores the mechanism, market competition, consumer behavior and sustainable development behind the marketing strategy of this sales model, and aims to provide market insight and decision-making reference for relevant enterprises and practitioners.

Through the sales analysis of surplus food blind box, this paper hopes to reveal the market position and potential of this sales model, and provide relevant enterprises and practitioners with targeted market insights and decision-making references. Surplus food blind box not only solve the problem of food waste, but also bring value and fun to consumers. Through an in-depth analysis of its marketing strategy, market competition, consumer behavior and sustainable development, it

provides some guidance and support for the further promotion and development of the surplus food blind box. The following list will be detailed later.

As an innovative marketing model, the surplus food blind box has generated extensive discussion and attention in the market. In-depth research and analysis of the marketing strategy and market position of the surplus food blind box is of great significance for understanding its role and significance in the catering industry.

The emergence of surplus food blind box solves the problem of surplus food that is prevalent in the catering industry. Every year, a large amount of food is wasted around the world, resulting in a waste of resources and pressure on the environment. Surplus food blind box contribute to environmental protection and sustainability by reusing leftover food and reducing the amount of it that is wasted. This innovative sales model has changed consumers' bias towards surplus food to some extent, leading them to reflect on the importance of surplus food and sustainable consumption.

The marketing strategy of surplus food blind box brings consumers a new shopping experience. The introduction of the concept of blind box makes it impossible for consumers to predict the specific food content contained in the surplus food blind box, which brings excitement, surprise and taste to them. At the same time, surplus food blind box is usually sold at preferential prices, which have certain economic advantages for consumers. This unique sales model has attracted more and more consumer participation and attention, and is also a new marketing means and business opportunity for catering enterprises.

2. Basic Information of the Surplus Food Blind Box

2.1. Definition of a Surplus Food Blind Box

Blind box is a kind of toy box with random selection as the main feature, and it was originally mainly for selling doll hands [1]. Because it is impossible to know the specific goods in the blind box through external information, coupled with the hunger marketing method of its limited model, it greatly stimulates the desire of consumers to buy. With the popularity of the blind box in the young consumer group, the "blind box +" business model is rapidly produced, stationery blind box, beauty blind box, archaeological blind box, travel blind box emerge in an endless variety.

Secondly, the surplus food blind box is a special sales model that has emerged in recent years, packaging the surplus food in the catering industry into blind boxes and selling them to consumers at low prices. The so-called blind box refers to a product that cannot be predicted at the time of purchase, similar to the concept of "blind shopping" [2]. In the era of "everything can be blind box" consumption, the blind box craze continues. From toys to stationery to plane tickets, this time the blind box is staring at "leftovers". It is understood that the leftovers in the "surplus food blind box" are not the leftovers that the guests eat, but the meals that have not been left in the kitchen, or the simple food such as baked pastries and sushi. The surplus food blind box applies this concept to the food field, allowing consumers to buy the leftover food with a short shelf life and food safety at a lower price.

For consumers, surplus food blind box also offer an affordable option. The price is relatively low, people can try a variety of different dishes, and do not have to prepare and cook the ingredients themselves, saving time and energy. At the same time, the surplus food blind box can also bring consumers a sense of freshness and surprise, increasing the joy of life.

2.2. Development History of Surplus Food Blind Box

Surplus food blind box is a special sales model that emerged in 2015, which packages the surplus food in the catering industry into blind boxes and sells it to consumers at a low price. The contents of the food in the box are unpredictable at the time of purchase, similar to the concept of "blind

shopping". Consumers can choose a specific type of surplus food blind box on the online platform or App at a relatively low price. After receiving the blind box, consumers will know the specific contents.

The "surplus food blind box" has a long history [3]. "Too Good To Go", launched in Denmark in 2015, is popular in many European countries by setting up a trading platform to sell food that is not sold out before closing time at a discount [4]. It is understood that the concept of surplus food blind box arose from abroad. In China, the platform for selling "surplus food blind box" has appeared in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and other cities, selling food types mainly bread and desserts, drinks and coffee, convenient cooked food. The development history of surplus food blind box in China can be traced back to 2019. At that time, a Chinese catering company began to package and sell surplus food according to the needs of its business. This practice has not only been welcomed by consumers, but also caused widespread attention and discussion on social media. Surplus food blind box has received more attention due to their unique sales model and contribution to reducing food waste.

2.3. Popularity Factors of Surplus Food Blind Box

2.3.1. Diversified Product Portfolios

The product mix of the surplus food blind box is one of the important factors affecting the sales. Consumers need a variety of options when buying surplus food blind box to meet different tastes and needs. Therefore, when selling surplus food blind box, restaurants need to provide a diversified product portfolio to meet the needs of consumers.

Surplus food blind box from different cuisines can be provided. When consumers buy surplus food blind box, they often choose their favorite cuisines, such as Sichuan cuisine, Guangdong cuisine, Hunan cuisine, etc. Therefore, the restaurant can provide different surplus food blind box according to different cuisines to meet the needs of consumers.

Different flavors of surplus food can be provided in blind boxes. When consumers buy surplus food blind box, they often choose their favorite flavors, such as spicy, sweet and sour, light and so on. Therefore, the restaurant can provide different surplus food blind box according to different tastes to meet the needs of consumers.

Surplus food blind box at different price points are available. Consumers often consider the price factor when buying surplus food blind box. Therefore, the restaurant can provide different surplus food blind box according to different prices to meet the needs of consumers.

2.3.2. Analysis of Consumer Behavior and Psychology

Consumer behavior influences marketing strategies. Consumers are the basis of all marketing activities, and understanding consumer behavior can provide a basis for marketing activities. The ideas and needs received in the process of consumption will affect the final choice of a certain product or service [5]. By investigating and studying the consumer behavior, purchasing decision-making process, concerns and attitudes of surplus food blind box, we can understand their views and preferences on surplus food blind box, and provide reference for formulating targeted marketing strategies.

(1) Curiosity and excitement: surplus food blind box attracts the curiosity and excitement of consumers through the concept of the blind box. Consumers can't predict the specific contents when they buy the surplus food blind box, and this uncertainty increases the fun and excitement of the purchase. Consumers' pursuit of novel, unique and interesting experiences is one of the important motivations for them to choose to buy surplus food blind box.

(2) Expect value and share experience: surplus food blind box is usually sold at preferential prices, giving consumers a sense of affordability. Consumers can obtain products whose food value is greater than the selling price by purchasing the surplus food blind box, and the existence of this expected value makes consumers choose to buy the surplus food blind box more actively. Some consumers also hope to get a chance to taste new foods by purchasing surplus food blind box, further increasing their willingness to buy. The purchase and sharing of surplus food blind box has also become a way to socialize and communicate. After purchasing the surplus food blind box, consumers can share their shopping experience and food content with friends and family. This sharing experience enhances consumers' sense of identity and participation in the surplus food blind box, and also promotes the word-of-mouth spread of the surplus food blind box.

(3) Hunger marketing methods: Hunger marketing means that merchants consciously reduce the supply quantity of goods, obtain high popularity by taking advantage of the law of supply and demand in the market and the social psychology of consumers, supplemented by publicity means, and create a phenomenon of competing to buy, so as to achieve the purpose of increasing the added value and profit rate of goods and enhancing brand awareness [6]. One of the hallmarks of hunger marketing is user engagement. In a surplus food blind box, consumers need to actively participate in the buying process and compete to obtain a limited number of boxes. This engagement increases consumers' sense of engagement and satisfaction with the purchase, increasing their identification and loyalty with the product.

3. Ways to Improve the Sales of Surplus Food Blind Box

3.1. Social Media Marketing

With the popularity of social media, more and more consumers are learning about products and services through social media. Therefore, restaurants can promote and market surplus food blind box through social media to increase awareness and sales. For example, brand exposure and awareness: through the extensive dissemination and sharing mechanism of social media, the brand can rapidly expand its exposure and visibility. Consumer engagement and user-generated content: Social media provides a platform for consumers to engage and interact directly, and brands can leverage this feature to promote user-generated content and consumer engagement. Word-of-mouth and social recommendation effects: user reviews and sharing on social media can have a significant impact on the surplus food blind box. Positive user reviews and recommendations will attract more interest and attention from potential customers, thus increasing sales.

3.1.1. Conduct Publicity Through WeChat Public Accounts

WeChat public account is a very popular social media, which can be promoted and marketed by Posting articles, pictures, videos and other forms. The restaurant can publish the relevant information of the surplus food blind box on the WeChat public account, such as product introduction, price, sales time, etc., to attract more consumers' attention [7]. With the continuous expansion of the demand for WeChat public accounts, relevant technical means will also continue to develop and innovate, and more enterprises and individuals will use WeChat public accounts to spread news, which greatly broadens the width and breadth of information spread by WeChat public accounts.

3.1.2. Promotion Through Micro-blog

Micro-blog is a very popular social media, which can be promoted and marketed through various forms such as posting news and hot topics. Restaurants can post information about the surplus food

blind box on Weibo, such as product introduction, price, sales time, etc., to attract more consumers' attention.

3.1.3. Publicity Through TikTok

TikTok is a very popular short video platform that can be advertised and marketed by posting short videos. Restaurants can post videos of surplus food blind box on TikTok to attract more consumers' attention [8]. TikTok refers to the interaction between professional producers of short videos, TikTok KOL and ordinary audiences, which is reflected in the audience's clicking, browsing, commenting and forwarding behaviors of videos and live broadcasts, and then the account operators respond to comments, adjust and re-create. The second is the interaction between the audience and the audience, which is reflected in the comments, interactions, forwarding, likes and other interactions made by many audiences on the same video and live broadcast. These two interactive situations are interwoven into a situational network characterized by interactive sharing, forming a huge emotional exchange market, attracting every subject to deliver emotions and exchange value experience in the production and exchange of products.

3.1.4. Combination of Online and Offline

The combination of online and offline is another important way to open new ideas for surplus food blind box. The combination of online and offline can expand the sales channel of the surplus food blind box to online, and also improve the brand awareness and recognition of the surplus food blind box.

The combination of online and offline can be taken in a variety of ways, such as using e-commerce platforms for sales and launching specialized surplus food blind box products [9]. Seize the 5G opportunity, actively seize the video news outlet, open a video live platform, and quickly promote the full video. To strengthen the depth of the content, from the psychological close to the audience, resonate. At the same time, offline supermarkets and restaurants can also be used for sales to improve product exposure and sales. The characteristics and advantages of surplus food blind box can be publicized through a combination of online and offline methods to improve consumers' cognition and trust in surplus food blind box.

3.2. Consumer Demand and Differences

The difference in consumer demand is one of the important factors in the surplus food blind box. Different consumer groups have obvious differences in demand for surplus food blind box, so it is very necessary to provide different sales strategies for different needs. For example, the need for healthy diet: with the improvement of people's health awareness, more and more consumers are concerned about the health and nutritional value of food. For the surplus food blind box, if it can meet consumers' demand for healthy ingredients and reasonable nutrition, it will help increase sales. Demand for environmental awareness: Growing environmental awareness has made consumers pay more and more attention to reducing surplus food and protecting the environment. Surplus food blind box, as a way to reduce surplus food, can attract consumers who are environmentally conscious and thus increase sales. Demand for novel experiences: Consumers' pursuit of novel and personalized experiences also has an impact on the sales of surplus food blind box. By randomly matching ingredients and dishes, the surplus food blind box provides consumers with a stimulating and surprising dining experience, attracting a part of consumers who crave novelty.

3.2.1. Needs that Consumers are most Concerned about

Food quality and safety information is an important basis for consumers to choose and purchase food [10]. Because of the difference of food quality and safety attributes, consumers pay different attention to the quality and safety information when choosing and buying different foods. Different food quality and safety information has different influence on consumers when they buy food. Surplus food blind box brands with good food quality are more likely to generate a sense of trust for consumers, thereby stimulating their repeated purchase intentions and recommendation intentions. After consumers are satisfied with the quality of the food, they will be more willing to buy the same brand of surplus food blind box again and recommend them to their friends and family, further boosting sales.

3.2.2. Consumption Needs with Different Values

According to different values, consumer groups can be divided into two categories: strong health awareness and strong environmental awareness. For consumer groups with strong health consciousness, they can start from the perspective of food safety and nutritional value, take fresh, healthy and nutritious as a selling point, and emphasize the hygiene and quality of the surplus food blind box. For consumer groups with strong environmental awareness, they can start from the perspective of environmental protection and sustainable development, focus on environmental protection, affordable and creative, and emphasize the environmental protection and sustainability of surplus food blind box.

3.2.3. Different Consumption Needs such as Age, Gender and Occupation

Similarly, different age, gender, occupation and other consumer groups have different needs for surplus food blind box. Young people pay more attention to flavor and creativity, can design different tastes, different forms of surplus food blind box; Female consumer groups pay more attention to beauty and hygiene, and can design exquisite packaging and sanitary surplus food blind box; White-collar consumer groups pay more attention to affordable and convenient, can provide food ordering services and food delivery services.

4. Optimization the Sales of Surplus Food Blind Box

The emergence of the surplus food blind box has brought a new consumption pattern to the food industry. Unlike traditional restaurant ordering, the surplus food blind box is a randomly selected way to package the restaurant's remaining dishes for sale. This way can not only reduce waste and save costs, but also meet the needs of consumers and provide more diversified choices. However, how to open new sales ideas and improve the sales of surplus food blind box is still a problem that needs to be solved.

4.1. Ensure Product Quality

The product quality of the surplus food blind box is one of the important factors affecting the sales. When consumers buy surplus food blind box, they are not only concerned about the price, but also about the quality and health of the food. Therefore, when the restaurant sells the surplus food blind box, it is necessary to ensure the quality and health of the food, adopt more stringent production standards and environmental protection measures to ensure the food safety of consumers.

4.2. Improve the Popularity and Reputation of the Surplus Food Blind Box

Consumers tend to pay more attention to brand and word of mouth when buying surplus food blind box. Therefore, there are many ways for restaurants to increase the awareness and reputation of the surplus food blind box, such as promoting on social media, participating in various food shows and events, and collaborating with other brands. By improving visibility and reputation, you can attract more consumers' attention and increase sales.

4.3. Continuous Innovation and Improvement

The surplus food blind box is a new type of consumption mode, which needs continuous innovation and improvement to meet the needs of consumers. According to consumer feedback and market changes, restaurants can constantly adjust the types and combinations of products to provide more diversified choices. At the same time, through continuous improvement of sales channels and service methods, improve consumer satisfaction and loyalty, attract more consumers.

4.4. Environmentally Friendly and Reduce Food Waste

Being environmentally friendly and reducing surplus food are the core concepts and goals of the surplus food blind box. In the process of selling surplus food blind box, it is necessary to pay attention to the promotion and practice of environmental protection and reducing surplus food. In product design, environmental protection and reducing surplus food need to be considered, such as the use of reusable lunch boxes, controlling the size of dishes, etc. At the same time, it is also necessary to pay attention to the promotion and practice of environmental protection and surplus food reduction in the sales process, such as the use of slogans and publicity means to raise consumers' awareness of environmental protection and surplus food reduction.

5. Conclusion

Surplus food blind box is a special commodity form that has arisen in recent years, and its unique marketing method has attracted the attention and participation of consumers. This paper discusses its potential and influence in the market through the analysis of the marketing strategy of surplus food blind box. However, people are also aware that there are some shortcomings in the marketing of surplus food blind box.

First of all, food quality is one of the important factors affecting the sales of surplus food blind box. Consumers pay more attention to the safety and health of food and have higher requirements for food quality. However, in the surplus food blind box, there may be certain hidden dangers in food quality due to the source of ingredients and storage time restrictions, which has an impact on consumers' purchasing decisions. Secondly, transparency and trust in blind box marketing of surplus food also face certain challenges. Since consumers cannot know the specific contents of the blind box in advance, their concerns about the quality, taste and freshness of the food may lead to hesitation and uncertainty in purchasing. Therefore, providing more information and assurance will increase consumer trust, which in turn will boost sales of surplus food blind box. Finally, as a new commodity form, the surplus food blind box has certain advantages and challenges in marketing. In solving the shortcomings of the surplus food blind box, the industry and enterprises need to work together to ensure the quality of food and the rights and interests of consumers, and promote the sustainable development of food consumption. Only in this way can the marketing of surplus food blind box better meet consumer demand and promote the healthy development of the market.

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