

Analysis on the Marketing Strategy of Blind Box

Yuqing Yang^{1,a,*}

¹New Channel-UIBE Qingdao A-level Centre, Qingdao, Shandong, China, 266000

a. aururo20220622@163.com

*corresponding author

Abstract: In recent years, as blind boxes are becoming more and more popular among consumers, the blind box economy is booming. From hot toys to cultural and creative products, from digital appliances to food and clothing, buying and sharing blind boxes has become a new consumer trend. A toy box that is labeled "blind" means that the consumer cannot know in advance what sort of goods will be inside. This trend of toys targets the young consumer market, stimulating consumers to buy and rebuy. Blind boxes' unknowability can pique customers' curiosity, increase their readiness to buy, better activate the market for consumer goods, and boost their potential for consumption. As a marketing carrier, blind box can innovate and develop new cultural business forms, and also extend the cultural industry chain. Traditional culture is full of vitality under the guidance of new consumption patterns. Looking at the development of blind box economy in recent years, with the rise of blind box economy, many problems have been exposed, breeding industry chaos. This paper analyzes the reasons why blind box is so popular, its marketing success and its reasons, as well as some existing problems and future prospects, so as to offer some references for future researches on blind box industry.

Keywords: blind box, industry marketing, strategy consumer culture, gambler psychology, future development prospects

1. Introduction

In the early 20th century, Japanese department stores began to deal with expired goods in the form of mystery bags, and blind boxes appeared early. Blind boxes, originally introduced as cards, were popular [1]; with the rise of fashion toys, attracting the attention of merchants, so investment in major IP, blind box appeared.

From The Japanese mystery bag in the early 20th century to the American gashapon in the 1980s, to the global popularity of the blind Sonny Angel box in the early 21st century [2]. Driven by contemporary trend culture, blind box has become one of the trend toys with its personality of attacking consumer psychology accurately. Blind box refers to a toy box in which consumers cannot be informed of specific product styles in advance. This trend of toys precisely cuts into the young consumer market, with its limited hunger marketing way, stimulates consumers to buy and re-purchase desire. The unknowability of blind boxes can satisfy consumers' curiosity, improve consumers' willingness to consume, better activate the consumer market and stimulate consumption potential [3]. With the broad prospect of trendy game industry, Chinese brands started by blind box also quickly become popular, and gradually enter the international trendy game market, usher in their

own highlight moment. Chinese blind box brands such as Bubble Mart and 52Toys have become the new leader of China's trendy play industry, and even the global trendy play industry.

First of all, China's booming economy contributes to the development of blind boxes. Second, the derivative market has grown as a result of the nation's strong support for the animation industry, the gradual maturation of IP authorization, the rise of many domestic animation and cartoon artists, and so on. Finally, in terms of social environment, the "post-80s" and "post-90s" mainly improve their consumption ability. According to the survey results, in 2019, Bubble Mart ranked first in the market share of the fashion game industry, and its competitors were mainly Dreams/MedicomToy, 52Toys and Other toy stores in Japan, and Shidong Culture in China. Building 12 has a similar positioning with Paomat. It is the first cultural and creative company in China's Internet original animation industry that systematically arranges the whole ACG industry chain. It attaches great importance to IP image and has excellent IP operation capability [2].

This paper analyzes the reasons why blind box is so popular, its marketing success and its reasons, as well as some existing problems and future prospects, so as to offer some references for future researches on blind box industry.

2. Marketing Strategy Analysis

More options are now available to consumers thanks to the thriving blind box economy, and consumers are also becoming more choosy due to the diversity of the blind box culture.

2.1. Precise Positioning of Consumer Groups and Price

Adopting suitable marketing techniques for various consumer groups after precise positioning of product customer groups can produce double the results with half the effort. According to the "2020 Global Art Market Report", the "post-80s" and "post-90s" high net worth demographic has taken the lead in driving the art consumption market, accounting for 49% of all active collectors. Adult toys are Bubble Mall's well defined market positioning. They are between the ages of 18 and 35, with a mean age of 27 [4]. They are mostly young women employed in first- and second-tier cities as white-collar workers and corporate employees. The majority of them belong to the main two yuan consumer groups. This generation's people have different values and ways of living than the preceding one. They view life and consumerism as being for the goal of seeking out sensory stimulation. The majority of these consumers are able and ready to support their interests because they have respectable employment and high earnings. It is evident that the bubble in modern consumer psychology, fashion, and fast food industrial art collections. These market patterns are what really matter [5].

Price has been a significant deciding factor for customers' purchases for a very long time. Paopao supermarket has a single style and often costs between 39 and 89 yuan. The economic barrier to collecting products is reduced by this low market pricing method, and once the consumer is "in the hole", he or she will be motivated and curious to purchase the subsequent item.

2.2. Build a Variety of Offline Marketing Scenarios

Make a lot of scenarios for marketing. Physical stores' scene marketing strategy adds social value. One of Bubble Mart's greatest accomplishments is that its stores have evolved into areas that include art exhibition, user social interaction, tailored experiences, and other features. To help create shopping experiences and increase brand exposure, Bubbomat has worked with shopping centers to open transient themed pop-up stores. The shops are situated in first- and second-tier cities' malls. Blind boxes are similar to jewelry in that they may not be very useful if purchased, but they give young people a chance to consume in public settings, satisfy their desire to be noticed by their peers, and serve as a platform for social media posts and conversation topics [6]. Despite the fact that young

people predominate in the mall, they do not consume much. Young people can achieve their pursuit of joy in consumption at the lowest cost thanks to the bubbles market, which sells items for 50–100 yuan.

Bubbomat also works with museums to promote the integration of trendy play with historical culture. Archaize quadrangle, launched Chengdu limited panda Molly style. Wide and narrow Alley, a "millennium city", has realized the integration of fashion brand and historical culture with the arrival of Boommart stores. In addition, four popular IPs of Bubble Mart gathered in Shanghai, mainly are interactive theme display, full series of pop-up shops, blind box recycling public welfare activities, etc., to create an immersive, cool adventure experience full of industrial aesthetics [7].

2.3. Social and Virtual Marketing

The social and retail lives of young people are a seamless fusion of online and offline pursuits. The creation of the online community for bubbomat is similar to the creation of social spaces for its significant consumer groups, resulting in the product itself becoming a social topic.

Achieve comprehensive coverage of multiple media channels based on Weibo and Wechat. Through digital marketing, Bubbomat has expanded consumer groups, satisfied audience needs, and established public praise among the audience. In social media, we have increased investment in Weibo, Wechat, Xiaohongshu, Douban, Zhihu, Douyin Kuaishou, Bilibili and other platforms [8]. Engage in word-of-mouth marketing by updating product content in real time, releasing information in a timely manner, and relying on audience social networks. Through news reports, exclusive interviews, live broadcast and other means to achieve wide dissemination and greater influence. In the sales channel, through cooperation with Taobao, Xianyu, small program and other platforms to achieve profits [9].

2.4. Cross-border Joint Marketing

2.4.1. IP Joint Marketing of Well-known Animation at Home and Abroad

Popomat cooperates with large IP companies including Disney, Universal, Japan and South Korea to promote popular gaming culture. Moreover, it has been co-branded with existing animation IP that has gained a wide audience to make more breakthroughs, such as toy Story and other co-branded animation Gundam series produced by Bubble Marte, crayon Shin and Naruto series. Joint name with well-known animation IP can not only bring more audiences who love animation into the target consumer group, expand the original market, but also improve their popularity [10].

2.4.2. Cross-border Joint Marketing

In recent years, Bubble Mart has co-signed with a number of brands, including Dove, Wahaha, Infurtha, L'Oreal, Casio, King of Glory, Everbright Credit Card, etc., covering beauty, animation games, food, daily use and other fields.

Like a limited edition with Tomorrow's Child, the audiences of Tomorrow's Children are mostly between 16 and 20 years old, which has the characteristics of attracting the attention of young audiences. This is the "Molly's Children of Tomorrow Limited Edition" created by Bubbomart based on the common target group. Blind box breaks the trend culture circle, infiltrates the variety circle, increases the favor of young users, but also excavates the potential consumer group. Baomaomat cooperates with cities, brands and IP authorization, so that its IP has been deeply rooted in the minds of the users. The marketing strategy of cross-border cooperation has made it successful and hot, which can effectively guarantee the quality and frequency of new series and pay attention to the extensive customer group [11].

3. Problems Existing in Blind Boxes at the Present Stage

At this stage, the problem lies in three aspects: not guaranteed product quality, absent after-sales service, and weak offline supervision. During the pandemic, Popumaat's new "AYLA Animal fashion collection" was accused of copying Dollchatueau's work from three years ago. After the incident, Bubbles mart forced users to refund and recall the products, causing dissatisfaction among its fans. In addition to the problems of the product itself, there were also some problems in the sales process. For example, some consumers drew blind boxes in the small program of Bubble Mart. When they opened the box, it showed that the box was hidden [12]. Consumers felt cheated in this process, resulting in bad consumption experiences. The blind box followed an exciting gambling pattern. Prior to opening the mysterious box, consumer expectations peaked, peaking at the time of opening the box, followed by disappointment and euphoria. The happy people wanted to keep feeling happy, whereas the unhappy people wanted to change their mood. A large number of young individuals in the market have immersed themselves ever deeper in the hype blind box. Blind box selling for fun can experience momentary success, but this success is fleeting. Blind boxes dependent on the pleasure of selling will unavoidably be impacted when consumer impulse slowly fades. If blind box value and brand value are not strengthened, there will not be a strong basis and the product will struggle to experience long-term development [13].

The popularity of blind boxes has made us aware that a group of merchants who are aware of and responsive to human nature are behind the manipulation of mass consumption. With the advent of the consumption era and the upgrading of consumption, the general populace is seeking more spiritual and emotional fulfillment in the consumption of goods, striving to outdo themselves and yearning for the release and happiness of their hearts. Young people use blind boxes as a way to establish their individuality and establish their own social network. The blind box items must keep innovating and be more attuned to the sentiments and cultural trends that underlie people's buying patterns if they want consumers to remember them. The blind box economy, a novel selling strategy, has sparked a number of disagreements throughout its development [14]. To protect the legitimate rights and interests of consumers in such a new economic form of development, relevant departments must implement pertinent laws and regulations, promptly investigate and sanction poor product quality, murky business practices, and other actions. For the purpose of preventing infractions, internet service providers should improve the scrutiny and oversight of blind boxes. Customers should make informed decisions when shopping, avoid losing themselves in virtual reality, and promptly notify the appropriate authorities of any violations by merchants. Only high-quality product content can increase an enterprise's vitality, so businesses should always act in good faith [15].

4. Conclusion

Driven by the rapid development of trend culture, China's blind box industry has successfully entered the peak of development, and consumer groups are gradually stable. With the blind box economy hot, unusual blind box industry wanton taste, blind box brand vicious competition phenomenon out. In the face of this situation, major blind box brands need to timely adjust their coping strategies and fully consider their future development direction. They can try to break through the inherent mode and promote the derivative career development of blind box, so as to further promote the sustainable development of blind box industry. Or by enriching the diversity of IP, gradually expand the blind box consumer group; we can also strengthen the supervision of blind box market, standardize the commercialization level of the blind box market, and make the blind box industry become a part of the social economy. In short, under the influence of the marketing model with high gross margin and high growth and the z-generation entertainment carrier with surprise economy and social economy, China's blind box industry still has a promising future.

This paper analyzes the reasons and marketing methods of blind box popularity in the market and points out its problems. However, the paper only referred to the existing data, and did not collect new data through questionnaires or visits in reality. If having enough time, this paper will investigate consumers by age and region, and then further study the consumption preferences of age groups and the future development prospects of blind box industry.

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