

Symbol Marketing: Branding and Promotion of Beauty Products

—Taking YSL Cosmetics as an Example

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Abstract: In this era of rapid economic development, all cosmetic brands are in fierce competition, but homogeneous products are flooding. The brand needs to allow potential customers to firmly choose this product among all the products within a limited time. For brands, it is very important to have a good symbol marketing. There are too many one-sided claims about this marketing strategy. By investigating the cosmetics marketing of the YSL brand in 2016, and the use of 4P theory and some data investigation techniques in the article. The final research results show that correct symbol marketing is a successful marketing strategy for merchants, and it will also leave a deep impression on customers. The final research results show that correct symbol marketing is a successful marketing strategy for merchants, and it will leave a deep impression on customers. But merchants can't do too much marketing, because it may cause customers' resentment. Therefore, symbol marketing plays an important role in the interaction between brands and consumers. It allows brands to target consumer groups more accurately, accelerate their purchase demands, and also allow them to burst into a strong consumption desire in a short period of time, but this marketing method cannot be overdone.

Keywords: symbol marketing, 4P, YSL brand

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of China's economic development, all kinds of marketing are also increasing. Because of the impact of the epidemic before, consumers who usually go out to socialize and need makeup have to be quarantined at home and wear masks when going out, so makeup is due to its special social attributes. Affected by the epidemic, residents have been quarantined at home for a long time during the epidemic in the past, and their natural income will also be relatively reduced. YSL also focuses on online and offline sales strategies and keeps up with market trends. According to consumer needs, brands gain consumers through different methods such as endorsement and Weibo to increase their popularity. In recent years, the brand has continuously attracted more young consumers through various marketing methods. But the current research lacks the in-depth exploration of consumer psychology. On the one hand, it will cause consumers' resentment and resistance and thus lose potential customers.

On the other hand, excessive marketing will make consumers think that merchants have used unreasonable means to sell products. As a result, the reputation of the merchant is damaged. Moreover, many consumers will speak out in Moments or TikTok to let more people know about the bad behavior of the merchant, which will have a greater negative impact on the merchant. Based on these two backgrounds, the article puts forward how to better shape and promote the brand of beauty products. This article will understand the impact of YSL's marketing strategy on consumer decision-making and provide valuable reference and advice for marketers and the cosmetics industry. To help them formulate more effective marketing strategies in a highly competitive market.

The marketing strategy adopted by YSL lipstick in recent years can grasp the consumer psychology of the public and use different publicity methods to make consumers consume. In today's rapid economic development, symbol marketing can promote the rapid development of its own brand. Symbol marketing refers to the establishment of a specific connection between a certain product and its meaning. It uses the difference in meaning as the basic means of distinguishing enterprise products from other similar products, and at the same time satisfies consumers' psychological and spiritual satisfaction through this aspect [1]. By instilling customers with long-term, comprehensive and unique symbol concepts, the brand makes customers agree with its brand values and engraves the brand symbols in the hearts of customers. For example, YSL uses symbol marketing to influence consumer cognition and guide consumers to implement purchase behavior or sells through network marketing (sales virtual communities and network platforms), because they are the marketing with the largest number of users. But on the one hand, lipstick has gradually become the cosmetic product with the fastest replacement speed and the highest sales [2]. On the other hand, in the survey, it was found that sometimes symbol marketing has a meaning beyond the use value of products to consumers, and they would gradually feel disgusted. Moreover, there is a lack of in-depth exploration of consumer psychology in the current literature. This article believes that YSL's brand marketing strategy can not only bring more people's attention and product exposure, but also deepen the brand image, and can also increase brand value and sales. Although YSL's marketing strategy can attract more consumers, sometimes it is too excessive and can cause resentment. The subject of this paper is the symbol marketing of YSL, and then use 4P theory to study. Prove why their marketing is successful through products, prices, promotions, and sales channels.

2. Take YSL's Star Lipstick for Example

YSL is a French luxury brand. Founded in 1961, it is famous all over the world for its fashion, cosmetics, perfume and other series of products. The YSL brand is renowned worldwide for its high-quality designs and materials. The brand has many classic styles and design features, and cosmetics are one of them [3].

YSL has adopted a variety of marketing strategies, one of which is symbolic marketing. YSL limited edition Christmas star lipstick is an example. In 2016, YSL released the limited-edition Christmas star lipstick in the Chinese market in November, and then there was a topic of "letting boyfriend give YSL star" in the circle of friends and Sina Weibo. Propaganda [4]. At that time, when a topic was forwarded, in just half an hour, the posts in Moments accounted for 80%. This is the copywriting of "The one who buys YSL Star Lipstick for you is a good boyfriend". Obviously, this copywriting has a sense of suggestion, using love to "oppress" the object to buy it for you, and let the girlfriend hint to the boyfriend that "you will love me if you buy it" to trigger netizens' discussions and searches for the product. It promotes the blind consumption of commodities by potential consumers, especially women, and also attracts many stars to follow suit and forward [5]. Stars are the core of communication, and the retail price of YSL continues to rise in this upsurge. It has risen from the official price of 320 yuan to the purchasing price of 1,000 yuan, because it was launched in China a few months later and it is difficult to buy.

3. Analysis of YSL Lipstick Symbol Marketing Problems

This kind of symbolic marketing made it rank first in the sales volume of China's lipstick market in 2016. The special logos of "YSL" and stars are printed on the whole line of products, forming a unique brand symbol. These enhance the recognition of the product, making the product packaging also have a unique selling point. Because the packaging is more attractive to those born in the 80s and 90s, and the product is sold on Valentine's Day, its marketing timing is also in line with the preferences of younger audiences [6]. The price is different from other merchants. It was originally priced at 320 yuan each, but the price rose to 1,000 yuan each due to the massive popularity brought by the stars. For the first time, YSL beauty's annual sales exceeded 1 billion euros. This is because of the existence of symbolic consumption with consumers. This group of people tends to pay more attention to face, their affirmation and recognition of the value promoted by the brand. Therefore, a stable and lasting relationship between consumers and brands is formed in this way [7]. No other lipstick brand has done this before. In terms of sales channels, it is mainly department stores and specialty stores for high-end consumers. Offline stores are concentrated in major mid-to-high-end business districts, and low-end online shopping platforms such as Pinduoduo are not selected for online purchases. The brand creates a cultural symbol of luxury and luxury. According to L'Oreal's financial report data, YSL's online and offline sales increased by 40% year-on-year, which shows that YSL's sense of light luxury is especially popular among consumers in China. Although the number of YSL beauty stores in China is currently only about 30, it still cannot stop young women from buying [8]. YSL uses social media to promote star lipstick. It uses the brand's unique topic "Let boyfriends give YSL stars" in the whole promotion stage. It deepens users' memory of brand symbols and firmly binds symbols with the brand. They regard the product as a symbol of love, and the logic of not buying is not loving. In this way, the popularity has risen and continued, and the driving force behind the scenes is to select this controversial point to symbolize marketing. Moreover, each push advertisement on Weibo, WeChat and other platforms has a picture or video, and the copywriting plays a role in further explaining the content and theme of the advertisement [9]. In addition, YSL also invited some celebrities to endorse the Star Lipstick. The images and styles of these stars are in line with the brand and can better show the elegance and nobility of the Star Lipstick. YSL's marketing follows the principle of "public relations first, advertising second". Its public relations ability is strong, and its advertising will inevitably do better. The marketing methods and effects of the Star series in China can prove this point [10].

YSL accurately grasped the psychology of consumers, and it also provided some special services for Star Lipstick. For example, when consumers buy star lipstick, they can enjoy the engraving service and engrave their name or favorite text on the lipstick, which allows consumers to use star lipstick more personalized. It can be seen that L'Oreal's high-end cosmetics department has gathered 12 brands with independent styles, each targeting customer groups with different needs, and YSL's design this time is suitable for young women [11]. YSL's symbolic marketing strategy makes star lipstick a popular product. Through the brand's unique design, high-quality ingredients and various marketing strategies, YSL has successfully linked the consumer symbols of star lipstick with nobility, elegance, high quality and personalization, making consumers more willing to buy and use this product. According to the point of view of the article, the object itself surpasses the attribute of practicality and rises to a symbol with social value, and the exchange value contained in the symbol is the fundamental pursuit of the consumer society. In the marketing activities of YSL star lipstick, users are also encouraged to participate and interact. For example, by forwarding lottery draws, sharing product information and other behaviors, this will increase users' understanding and recognition of the product, and at the same time expand the scope of product dissemination. Combination of online and offline. This allows consumers to have a deeper understanding of products

and brands and enhances user stickiness and loyalty. To sum up, the success of the marketing case of YSL Star Lipstick lies in its flexible use of social media platforms, creating hot topics, encouraging user participation and interaction, and the marketing strategy of combining online and offline. These strategies not only increase product visibility and attention, but also increase consumer recognition of products and brands.

Although YSL's symbolic marketing can effectively increase brand awareness and influence, there are also some disadvantages: the survey found that YSL's long-term symbolic marketing will cause many consumers to consume too much emotion and blindly consume stimulating consumption, which will make them have no interest in the outside world is too sensitive. As shown in the Figure 1, 47% of the purchases are not necessities [12]. This may have a negative impact on the brand.

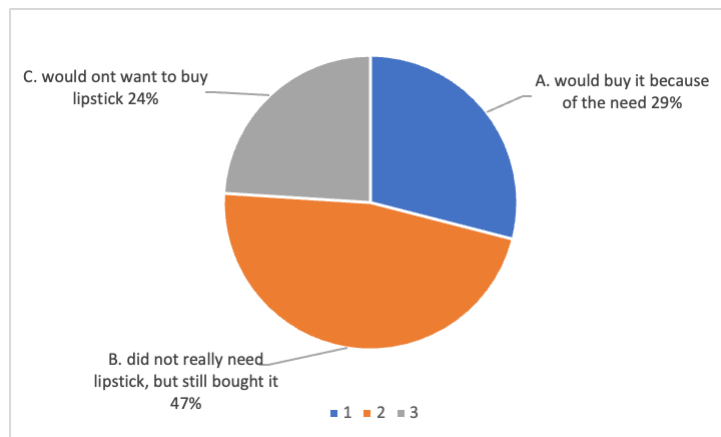


Figure 1: The mood of the customer when buying lipstick [12]

As a luxury brand, YSL is facing fierce competition from other brands and needs to know more about customers' needs. For example, take PRADA as an example. It has an online official website. But even so, there are still some Chinese consumers who think that the official website cannot be sold, and consumers think that it is not the best if it is not a physical store or an online shopping agent. As a result, more and more people choose to find an agent to buy, but this method also hits the brand's arms, and once again successfully laid a solid foundation and firm position for their own brand with excellent marketing methods. However, YSL needs to improve its sales channels, because the brand's channels in retail stores and buyer stores are too wide, and the price of products is questioned by customers [13].

4. Suggestions

To sum up and discuss further, YSL's symbol marketing needs to avoid the above disadvantages while creating brand value. New products must start from the details, so that customers can experience pleasure and comfort in an all-round way. Because according to the research of successful cases, multinational companies (Procter & Gamble) conducted a lot of market research on the living habits of Chinese consumers before entering the Chinese market. Only by doing so can they truly understand consumers' consumption psychology and consumption needs, and then integrate products with local market needs [14]. Therefore, YSL can use this as a reference to put consumers first, so that the development of entering the Chinese market will grow stronger.

5. Conclusion

All in all, the marketing strategy of YSL star lipstick is successful but not excessive. The research of this article is to better market the YSL brand and adopt a variety of different marketing strategies. For

example, traditional cultural marketing can be carried out. In the practice of cultural marketing, YSL can combine the external packaging of products with historical culture, and then spread those meaningful histories to the society, which is an inner attraction to consumers. There are also emotional marketing, weakness marketing, etc., which can attract different consumer groups and increase brand awareness and sales. But what is lacking in this research is how to increase the added value of products, and how to combine the construction of service system with the improvement of product quality, so as to implement it into the practice of enterprise construction. In short, as a high-end luxury brand, YSL must continue to innovate and expand its product line, and pay attention to marketing and brand promotion. The future development prospects of YSL are very optimistic. However, it also needs to continue to respond to market challenges and risks to ensure its sustainable and stable development by putting consumers first.

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