

Analysis of Mobile Game Marketing Strategy

- Taking “Honor of Kings” as an Example

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Abstract: With the development of mobile Internet technology and the upgrading of smart phones, the mobile game market has ushered in a huge space for development. If a mobile game wants to occupy a certain position in the highly competitive market and can develop for a long time, it is necessary to formulate an appropriate marketing Strategy. This paper takes "Honor of Kings" as the main research object, and combines the marketing theory to research and analyze the current marketing strategies of "Honor of Kings", in order to provide reference plans and improvement directions for the marketing strategies of mobile games. In general, strategy of “Honor of Kings” is based on interactive marketing, supplemented by others such as dissemination of live-broadcast platforms.

Keywords: mobile games, marketing strategy, Honor of Kings

1. Introduction

Mobile games refer to game software running on mobile clients, such as mobile phones, generally referred to as “mobile games”. With the development of technology and the continuous technological research and development of mobile game developers, the quality of mobile games is also getting higher and higher. The "2021 Mobile Game Industry Research Report in China"[1] shows that in 2020, the actual sales revenue of mobile games will reach 209.7-billion-yuan, accounting for 75.2% of the game industry's sales revenue, and the proportion of sales revenue has increased year by year. "Generation Z" accounts for more than half of the users, and is the core user group for mobile games. Among mobile phone users under the age of 25, about 80% of the users have installed mobile games. "Honor of Kings" is the No. 1 MOBA mobile game under Shenzhen Tencent. It was officially tested on both the IOS and Android platforms in November 2015. The gameplay is mainly based on competitive battles, which refer to both battle and communication online. Less than a year after its launch, it ranked first in the “China IP Value List Game List” at the China Pan-Entertainment Index Festival. At the beginning of 2022, the daily active users of “Honor of Kings” reached an average of 100 million per day. According to Sensor Tower's global mobile game revenue data [2] for the first quarter of 2022, global mobile games generated \$21 billion in revenue during the quarter, down 7% from the same period last year. Tencent's "Honor of Kings" topped the list with \$735 million in revenue. This paper will research and analyze the current marketing strategy of "Honor of Kings", and then understand the reasons for the success of “Honor of Kings”, in order to provide a reference plan and improvement direction for the marketing strategy of mobile games.

2. Marketing Strategy

2.1. The Design of the Game Is in Line with Consumer Psychology

“Honor of Kings” focuses on 5v5 fair competition. All heroes and most props in the game can be acquired through daily battle accumulation without additional recharge. The profit of the game "Honor of Kings" mainly comes from the recharge purchase of props and hero skins by game users, but the presence or absence of props and skins will only reflect the difference in special effects in the game, and the recharge amount of game users will not affect the fairness of the game. This game is free when you get started, and this design lowers the threshold for consumers to enter, thereby helping game products expand the consumer group and attract more consumers. As the head of public relations of Tencent Games said, whether this game is played well or not has nothing to do with charging money, but based on the ability to compete fairly in the game. This is the reason why the game "Honor of Kings" is so popular among young people [3][4]. Secondly, “Honor of Kings” has set exclusive lines for each hero, and these lines change with the hero's skin. The lines of each hero fit the character background of the character. Instructive lines are also set up in the game, and the lines in the game are more colloquial and disseminated. The popularization of game language has narrowed the gap between the real and virtual worlds, using the charm of buzzwords to attract a large number of user groups [5]. Lightweight game time is also an important reason. Judging from the nature of the game and the per capita monthly usage time of users, Honor of Kings is a premium mobile game. Because it is different from other types of mobile games, it requires players to spend a lot of time constantly doing task upgrades. Once players do not complete these daily tasks, they will fall behind other players. The “Honor of Kings” is almost light enough to do or not to do in terms of tasks, and the average length of a game is about ten minutes. Users can fully use the fragmented time for entertainment, and they can end at any time.

2.2. Dissemination of Live-broadcast Platforms

The rise of the “Honor of kings” is inseparable from the live-broadcast platform [6]. One of the most widely spread channels on the Internet is the live-broadcast platform. Tencent has chosen to cooperate with professional events and various live-broadcast platforms, and encourages the anchors of major live-broadcast platforms to conduct game live-broadcasts. By using online and offline communication platforms, the competitive nature of events and the entertainment of live-broadcasts have greatly increased the game's popularity. And it will invite traffic stars to endorse and play from time to time, such as launching star competitions, and using the traffic of stars to increase the topic of "Honor of Kings" in other social media and communities It can also attract more new players, increase The popularity and exposure of the game. On the other hand, mobile games have huge potential. For their own development, the live-broadcast platform will also strengthen the construction of the mobile game live broadcast category. On Huya Live (a well-known live-broadcast platform in China), the YS “Honor of Kings” League organized by the eight major game media During the event, well-known teams such as AG, Xian Ge, and Estar also signed up for the competition. The entire event ran through various live broadcast platforms and media in the form of anchor commentary, gaining more than 10 million views [7]. Up to now, the game live-broadcast of “Honor of Kings” is also the most popular category among various live broadcast platforms. Coupled with the promotion of many popular anchors, it has brought a large number of players and users to “Honor of Kings”.

2.3. Interactive Marketing and the Building of Social Game Community

Interactive marketing is an important strategy for advertising "Honor of Kings"[8]. Tencent's huge number of users and the social entertainment of the game are the keys to interactive promotion.

"Honor of Kings" is promoted in Tencent's game community and social software, guide its players to achieve publicity and promotion through the interaction of games and friends, and quickly absorb a large number of players with the help of the game's own attractiveness and advantages for word-of-mouth communication. The main reason why the game "Honor of Kings" has become a phenomenon in the Chinese game market is precisely because it has successfully created a vibrant gaming social community. "Honor of Kings" is a game developed by Tencent, and now the social software WeChat and QQ, which are indispensable in the daily life of Chinese consumers, are also developed by Tencent. Players want to register and log in to the "Honor of Kings" only through QQ or WeChat. This semi-mandatory game participation method not only reflects the influence of Tencent, but also provides convenience for users to register and log in to the game.

3. Discussion

In the current environment, there are still many problems in the mobile game market, the most important of which is the lack of innovation in game content [1]. As a rapidly developing industry, the mobile game industry will inevitably attract a large number of investors to the market, which not only promotes the development of the mobile game industry, but also brings some unavoidable problems. Once a popular game is launched, a variety of game products with highly similar gameplay and content will inevitably emerge in the short term, which makes the entire mobile game industry appear a serious homogenization phenomenon, which will inevitably lead to a lack of innovation in game content. If things go on like this, users will not only experience aesthetic fatigue, but also lose their freshness when faced with such game products that seem to have multiple choices but in fact have almost the same game modes. However, there are many other ways mobile game companies can succeed. It is a good way to hold offline events. For example, these companies can cooperate with some universities in different cities. This can attract many young people to pay attention to their games and increase their popularity everywhere. Second, these companies can choose to cooperate with others, even some companies across industries. In doing so, it can reflect its own IP image and influence well-known products in other fields, and promote each other with partners, so that the image of the game can enter the daily lives of consumers, thereby expanding its influence. Here is still taking "Honor of Kings" as an example. In 2019, it once cooperated with MAC Beauty. This cooperation was reached by "Honor of Kings" tracking the media conversations of game users. The makers of "Honor of Kings" found that online game users mentioned the MAC brand many times, because gamers accidentally found that the MAC lipstick perfectly matched the lip color of the game characters in "Honor of Kings".

In addition, the target audience of MAC and "Honor of Kings" are young women aged 18-24, which is an excellent cooperation opportunity for both parties. This event not only attracted the common attention of makeup lovers and game users, but also greatly enhanced the popularity of both brands among more young Chinese netizens. A lipstick promotion posts on the Weibo page of one of the celebrities involved in the promotion reached 4.7 million views and more than 120,000 discussions just 15 seconds after it was posted. So, what's the advice for the future of "Honor of Kings"? It's better for them to carry out more cross-border cooperation or create more conversations across multiple social media platforms.

4. Conclusion

This paper find out the current marketing strategy of "Honor of Kings", and then analyze the reasons for the success of "Honor of Kings". First, the company knows what exactly consumers want and it's free to play, which lower the barrier for the new. What's more, they use the dissemination of live-broadcast platforms to attract people. The most important is their interactive marketing. They built

the social game community and encouraged players to make secondary creations which keep the game community alive. Well, this paper mainly conducts a theoretical analysis, further investigation and analysis are needed and, in the future, sample survey analysis can be carried out. As a phenomenal mobile game, "Honor of Kings" is not only a role model and wind vane for the Chinese mobile game market, but also a microcosm of mobile game development. Its successful marketing strategy is undoubtedly worthy of research by other mobile game developers. and learning.

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