

Research on the Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumers' Purchase Intention

—Taking Xiaohongshu as an Example

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Abstract: With over 300 million registered members, Xiaohongshu, a social media network that mixes e-commerce and content development, has grown to be a crucial marketing tool for small enterprises. By providing visually appealing and educational content, Xiaohongshu enables businesses to build trust and loyalty with their target audience and perhaps affect consumer behavior and purchase intention. This study aims to examine the effect of Xiaohongshu marketing on consumer purchase intention for small enterprises, using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the Social Influence Theory, and the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) to provide insights and suggestions. The conclusion of this study is that Xiaohongshu marketing can have a significant impact on consumer behavior for small businesses.

Keywords: Xiaohongshu, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), social influence theory, Technological Acceptance Model (TAM), consumer behavior

1. Introduction

The rise of Xiaohongshu as a social media platform that combines e-commerce and content creation has become a crucial marketing tool for small enterprises in China. However, while visually appealing and educational content can build trust and loyalty with the target audience, it is still unclear how effective Xiaohongshu marketing is in influencing consumer purchase intention. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of Xiaohongshu marketing on consumer purchase intention for small businesses using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the Social Influence Theory, and the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) to provide insights and suggestions.

The research will focus on analyzing the design of the Xiaohongshu platform and its impact on consumer purchase intention [1]. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions: How does the platform design influence a consumer's purchase intention? What is the role of user-generated content, social influence, and the level of trust in the purchase decision-making process [2]? What is the effect of perceived usefulness and ease of use of the platform on consumer purchase intention?

By exploring these questions, this research will provide important insights into the effectiveness of Xiaohongshu marketing on consumer behavior for small businesses. Furthermore, this study

aims to make a significant contribution to the existing literature on consumer behavior and technology adoption by utilizing TPB, Social Influence Theory, and TAM to understand the impact of Xiaohongshu marketing on consumer purchase intention [3]. The findings of this study will provide valuable recommendations for small businesses to enhance their marketing strategies on Xiaohongshu and other social media platforms in China.

2. Theoretical Frameworks and Models

To comprehend the connection between Xiaohongshu marketing and consumer behavior, this study applies the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the Social Influence Theory, and the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a psychological theory that suggests a person's attitude towards a behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control all have an impact on their behavioral intention. According to the TPB, the more favorable a person's attitude is towards a behavior, the stronger their behavioral intention is to perform that behavior. Additionally, the perceived social pressure from the people around them and their perception of control over their behavior also impact their behavioral intention. Social Influence Theory, on the other hand, suggests that people are impacted by the beliefs and behaviors of those around them [4]. It is a social psychological theory that examines the ways people's thoughts, feelings, and actions are influenced by the presence and actions of others. In the context of Xiaohongshu marketing, social influence theory suggests that consumer sentiments about a product, social norms on the platform, and user-generated content can all impact how likely they are to purchase a product [5]. Finally, the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) is a model that explains how a person's intention to use technology is determined by their perception of its utility and usability. According to TAM, if technology is perceived as useful and easy to use, a person is more likely to have a positive attitude towards it and to intend to use it. In the context of Xiaohongshu marketing, TAM suggests that a customer's intention to make a purchase on the platform is influenced by their perception of the platform's utility and usability. Various scholars have used these theories to examine different aspects of consumer behavior and technology adoption. For instance, TPB has been used to study a wide range of behaviors, including online shopping, social media use, and e-learning. Scholars have found that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are all significant predictors of behavioral intention. Social Influence Theory has been used to study the impact of social influence on consumer behavior, particularly in the context of social media. Scholars have found that social influence from peers, influencers, and user-generated content can significantly impact a consumer's attitude towards a product and their purchase intention. Finally, the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) has been widely used to study technology adoption and acceptance, particularly in the context of e-commerce and mobile applications. Scholars have found that perceived usefulness and ease of use are the most significant factors that determine a consumer's intention to use a technology, which can impact their purchase intention on platforms like Xiaohongshu.

3. Analysis of Consumers' Purchase Intention

Several elements can affect consumer behavior when it comes to Xiaohongshu marketing. One of the most significant is user-generated content, such as reviews and photos, which can greatly shape a consumer's perception of a product. In addition, social influence from friends and influencers, along with the level of trust a consumer has in a business, can also have a big impact on their decision-making process. Finally, the perceived usefulness and ease of use of the platform itself can play a role in whether or not a consumer is willing to make a purchase.

3.1. Impact of Xiaohongshu Platform Design on Consumer Purchase Intention

The design of the Xiaohongshu platform can have a significant impact on a consumer's purchase intention. Firstly, the algorithm used to recommend content to users can affect their interest in a product. The more personalized and relevant the recommendations, the more likely a consumer is to engage with the content and potentially make a purchase. The platform's interface design and overall user experience can also affect a consumer's perception of the product and their willingness to buy it. For instance, a visually appealing and easy-to-navigate interface can create a positive impression and make a consumer more likely to trust the platform and the product being promoted. Additionally, the purchasing process on Xiaohongshu is relatively streamlined, with a variety of payment options and fast shipping times, which can make it convenient for consumers to make purchases. Finally, the way that ads are integrated into the platform can also impact consumer behavior. If the ads are too intrusive or irrelevant, they may have a negative impact on consumer trust and purchase intention.

3.2. Impact of User-Generated Content on Consumer Purchase Intention

User-generated content, such as reviews and photos, can play a crucial role in shaping a consumer's perception of a product and their willingness to purchase it. Consumers often rely on the opinions of others before making a purchase decision, and Xiaohongshu's focus on user-generated content means that consumers have access to a wealth of information and opinions about a product. The more positive and detailed the reviews and photos, the more likely a consumer is to trust the product and make a purchase. Additionally, influencer marketing is a common tactic in Xiaohongshu, and influencers can have a significant impact on consumer behavior. If a consumer trusts and values an influencer's opinion, they may be more likely to purchase a product that the influencer recommends.

3.3. Impact of Xiaohongshu's After-Sales Process and Attitude on Consumer Purchase Intention

The after-sales process and attitude of businesses on Xiaohongshu can also impact consumer purchase intentions. If a business is responsive to customer inquiries and complaints, provides clear information about returns and refunds, and generally has a positive attitude toward its customers, it can create a sense of trust and loyalty with consumers. On the other hand, if a business is unresponsive or has a negative attitude towards their customers, it can damage consumer trust and decrease their willingness to make a purchase. In addition, Xiaohongshu has a system in place for consumers to leave feedback and ratings on businesses, which can also impact consumer behavior. If a business has a high rating and positive feedback, it can increase consumer trust and purchase intention, while a low rating and negative feedback can have the opposite effect.

4. Limitations and Gaps in Existing Research and Future Research

Although the current research on Xiaohongshu marketing and consumer behavior offers useful insights, there are still a number of restrictions and gaps that need to be addressed. To study the effects of Xiaohongshu marketing on a larger range of goods and services, additional research is required. For instance, the majority of studies have solely focused on specific product categories, such as clothing and beauty products. More research is necessary to understand the effects of Xiaohongshu marketing on larger businesses because the majority of studies have only looked at small businesses.

The limits and shortcomings found in the existing study should be the focus of future research. Specifically, research should explore the impact of Xiaohongshu marketing on consumer behavior

for a wider range of products and services, and for both small and large businesses. Additionally, future research should explore the impact of Xiaohongshu marketing on consumer behavior across different regions and cultures. Finally, research should explore the potential of other social media marketing platforms in the Chinese market, such as WeChat and Douyin.

5. Conclusion

In summary, this study examines the impact of Xiaohongshu marketing on consumer purchase intention for small enterprises using the Theory of Planned Behavior, Social Influence Theory, and Technological Acceptance Model. The study finds that Xiaohongshu marketing can significantly impact consumer behavior for small businesses. Factors such as user-generated content, social influence, trust, and platform design all influence consumer purchase intention. The design of the Xiaohongshu platform can significantly affect a consumer's purchase intention, and user-generated content can shape a consumer's perception of a product. Although this study provides insights and suggestions for small enterprises, further research is needed to better understand the relationship between Xiaohongshu marketing and consumer behavior, particularly for different demographics and product types.

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