

Analysis of American Marvel Universe Movies' Marketing Modes Based on the "4I" Principles for Integrated Marketing

Dai Weizhan

University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

Abstract

In the context of new media in China, Microblogging sites have become one of the most favorite platforms where users can generate short posts in response to the topics of interests. Due to its popularity, Microblog marketing has achieved its position as one of the most sellable modes in social media. In line with this new approach of marketing, movie Microblogging makes its rapid move, evidently appeared in the case of American Marvel Universe movies. While American Marvel Universe movies have made some achievements in terms of Microblog marketing, some shortcomings are still observed. This study thus aims to identify the successful elements and the shortcomings of the Microblog marketing, in the context of Chinese movies.

I Research Background

1. Research Significance

According to 2018 Microblog User Development Report, the number of Microblog users exceeded 500 million, accounting for 48.7% of Chinese netizens, by September 2018. Microblog has thus become a major platform for new media marketing in China. As a we-media platform, offering a number of online marketing modes, Microblog is popularly chosen as a marketing tool for enterprises, including the film industry.

As of January 1, 2019, American Marvel movie official Microblog had 5.29 million accounts. Every Marvel movie had been publicized through Microblog marketing. When comparing Microblog marketing for the similar "superhero" movie themes of Chinese movies, American Marvel universe movies have achieved a greater extent from the Microblog marketing mode.

With this regard, American Marvel universe movies' Sina Microblog marketing modes were selected as the unit of the study. The "4I" principles for network integrated marketing were used as fundamental concepts for the analysis. The principles summarized the success and possible issues arisen from this new mode of marketing. In doing so, we can understand how Microblog marketing is applicable, and in what way the approach should be used in the contexts of Chinese movies.

2. Research Questions

- 1) Which group of people does Microblog marketing aim?
- 2) What problems does Microblog marketing encounter?
- 3) What approaches does Microblog marketing adopt in order to attract fans?
- 4) What other modes of marketing might be used in the process of Microblog marketing?
- 5) How can Microblog marketing be applied for Chinese movies?

II American Marvel Universe Movies' Microblog Marketing

1. Opening American Marvel Movie Microblog Account

In 2012, Marvel Studios Inc. opened an official Sina Microblog account and passed Sina Microblog 'blue V certification' (institution certification). It had 5.29 million fans, with 2,746 messages posted by January 1, 2019.

2. Main Marketing Modes of Marvel Studios Microblog

The marketing modes of Marvel Studios Microblog comprises as follows.

1) Integrated marketing of official Marvel movie Microblog account:

At present, there is only one official Marvel movie Microblog account, named 'Marvel Studios'. In this respect, all movie's promotion contents are in the same place, and thus Marvel movies' fans can continuously watch the films.

2) Popular star fever for the movies:

Marvel movies' leading actors opened a personal Microblog account one after another. They interact with fans, release movie-related contents, and share with fans about their life through their Microblog account. This means that fans receive the updated information about Marvel movies from Marvel movies' leading actors.

III Exploration and Analysis of American Marvel Universe Movies' Microblog Marketing

1. Analysis of the "4I" Principles for Network Integrated Marketing

The "4I" refers to the four principles of network integrated marketing, in terms of interestingness, interest, interaction, and individuality. These four principles are used to identify marketing behaviors and targets in this study.

- 1) Principle of interestingness is related to the extent to which the Microblog contents yield the level of interestingness in the Microblog marketing mode.
- 2) Principle of interest involves information and services on the Internet that would interest target audiences. For Marvel Studios Microblog, this principle covers messages, services, mental satisfaction, material interests, for example.
- 3) Principle of interaction deals with the digital media where users can create their contents and are involved in the interactions about the topics of interests. Microblog provides a platform where its audience can interact online, for example, discussing about the movies, discovering and predicting the events in the movies, which can be an exciting experience for the fans.
- 4) Principle of individuality involves the idea about consumer segmentation. For example, the information about Marvel movies reached the specific audience who were / would be

interested in the marketing contents. This principle is based on the precision of targeting the audience, and individualized marketing to segmented users would fit into this category of Microblog marketing.

2. Conclusions Drawn from the Analysis of Marvel Studios' Microblog Marketing

The following conclusions are drawn from the analysis of the “4I” principles in the contexts of Microblog marketing mode in Sina Microblog marketing mode for American Marvel universe movies in China.

- 1) Microblog users use a small amount of time when browsing Microblog. Therefore, it is recommended that Microblog quickly attracts users in the real time. This approach of Microblog marketing could convey information to target audience, and in doing so, it could potentially attract a larger number of users.
- 2) Fans of Marvel Studios Microblog are engaged in movies and movie-related contents. Therefore, movie Microblog marketing should acquire good knowledge in terms of users' interests.
- 3) The movies' fans used Microblog in order to gather information about movie-related contents, as well as enjoy Marvel movies online.
- 4) The only official Marvel movie Microblog account 'Marvel Studios' is available to serve audience generally, but there is no Microblog account that functions for users' interests and varied preferences for each movie or series.

3. Suggestions Based on These Conclusions

The potential issues existing in American Marvel universe movies' Microblog marketing are listed as follows.

- 1) Movies' Microblog contents should include popular movie trailers, posters, movie information, in order to catch fans' points of interests.
- 2) Based on the official Marvel Studios Microblog account, new Microblog accounts should be opened for each movie series, e.g. Iron Man series, so that publicity may be carried out for Iron Man fans precisely and interaction activities may be held in a better way.
- 3) The production team of Marvel movies could consider creating active personal Microblog accounts. Only a few members of the production team have opened a Microblog account, and their contents were rarely updated or have done so slowly. Posting more messages and interacting more with fans via Microblog could be beneficial.
- 4) More attention should be paid on social network-based Microblog marketing.

Advance publicity and audience discussion would have an effect on Marvel movies' degree of brand reputation. More efforts should be made on Microblog superhero topics with discussions after movies are released.

IV Summary

This paper explores and analyzes American Marvel Universe movies' Microblog marketing modes in the context of new media in China. It can be concluded as the following:

- 1) Microblog contents should be designed in accordance with the user's points of interest. Generally, Microblog marketers could create movie-related contents – e.g. movie trailer, short narrative, and film still. Irrelevant contents should be minimized.
- 2) Movies' Microblog marketing should consider users' benefits as a starting point. When users realize that the marketing content is relevant to their interests (or the content serves their needs), the marketing mode can become successful.
- 3) In the process of Microblog marketing, it is necessary to interact frequently with users. In this way, fans can be engaged in the marketing contents, which would contribute to the success in Microblog marketing.
- 4) It is very important to shape up particular movie cultures in the process of Microblog marketing. Individualized approaches in the Microblog marketing are recommended, in addition to conventional marketing mode. Due to the differences in the users' preference, various marketing modes (i.e. customized marketing approach) can be usefully employed in Microblog marketing.

References

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