

Research on new media marketing optimization strategies for elderly groups under the background of population aging

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Abstract. In the current era of the integration of population aging and digitization, the scale of elderly Internet users continues to expand. New media has gradually become the core carrier for the elderly to obtain information, socialize and communicate, and consume and shop. However, new media marketing targeting the elderly still has many pain points: poor adaptability of marketing content, high operational threshold of platforms, uneven credibility of merchants, and difficulty in building trust among elderly users, which seriously restrict the high-quality development of the elderly digital consumption market. This article takes the elderly group as the research object, combines consumer behavior theory and precision marketing theory, and adopts the case analysis method to sort out the new media usage habits and consumption behavior characteristics of contemporary elderly people, analyze the existing problems and causes of new media marketing in the elderly market, and finally propose targeted optimization strategies from four dimensions: enterprises, platforms, regulation, and society. It aims to promote the standardized and humanized development of the elderly digital consumption market and achieve a positive integration of new media marketing and the elderly consumer group.

Keywords: population aging, silver economy, new media marketing, elderly consumption, precision marketing

1. Introduction

With the continuous acceleration of China's aging population process, the consumption scale of the elderly group is constantly expanding, and the silver economy has become an important new engine driving the growth of the domestic consumer market [1]. In the context of the digital age, the full-scale popularization of smart phones and the continuous penetration of new media technologies have broken down the digital barriers for the elderly. Data shows that people over 60 years old have become the main force of new Internet users, and the Internet continues to penetrate into the middle-aged and elderly groups [2]. Nowadays, browsing Douyin, watching Kuaishou, shopping in live-streaming rooms and socializing on wechat have become the daily leisure activities of most elderly people. Unlike the young people's pursuit of trendy and personalized consumption concepts, the elderly pay more attention to practicality, safety and cost performance when

consuming. The special consumption characteristics also put forward new requirements for the new media marketing model.

However, the current new media marketing industry has a relatively low degree of adaptability to the elderly group. In daily life, it is common for the elderly to easily believe false health advertisements in live-streaming rooms, blindly recharge micro-short dramas, be defrauded by false online courses, and have their fees automatically deducted by mistake. Some merchants take advantage of the elderly's weak digital discrimination ability and emotional loneliness to carry out improper marketing, which not only infringes upon the rights and interests of elderly consumers but also disrupts the order of the silver-haired digital consumption market. Against this backdrop, studying the optimization strategies of new media marketing for the elderly group holds extremely strong practical significance.

This article adopts the case analysis method and literature review method to analyze the characteristics of new media usage and consumption behavior of the elderly group. In addition, this article analyzes the problems and causes of new media marketing in the elderly market, and proposes new media marketing optimization strategies suitable for the elderly group from multiple dimensions. This study optimizes the digital life experience of the elderly, safeguards their consumption rights and interests, and promotes the standardized and healthy development of the silver-haired consumption market.

2. Relevant concepts and theoretical basis

2.1. Consumer behavior theory

This theory focuses on exploring consumers' inner psychological changes and external behavior rules in the whole process of selecting, purchasing and using commodities. Affected by physical aging and living environment changes, most elderly people have relatively conservative consumption concepts, weaker information distinguishing ability and stronger emotional companionship demands. All these characteristics will directly affect their final online consumption decisions, which is the core basis for analyzing elderly consumption behaviors in this paper.

2.2. Precision marketing theory

The core idea of precision marketing is to classify consumer groups scientifically by using big data information, and push matched products and marketing contents according to different groups' living habits, consumption ability and personal preferences, so as to realize accurate customer reach and improve marketing efficiency. At present, many internet platforms have complete data recommendation functions, but few merchants make full use of this function to carry out classified marketing for different types of elderly users [3].

3. Analysis on new media usage and consumption characteristics of elderly groups

3.1. New media usage characteristics of the elderly

First of all, the time spent online is fragmented and relatively long. After retirement, the elderly have abundant free time, a regular and simple schedule, and mainly rely on mobile phones and new media for their daily leisure. It is not hard to notice in daily life that most elderly people spend more than four hours watching short videos and live streams every day, and some even reach eight hours. For instance, a 67-year-old man in

Beijing constantly watches short videos every day. Even when cooking, he sets up a tablet to watch them. Staying up late to watch TV series and short videos is also a common occurrence. His fragmented free time is almost all occupied by new media. Meanwhile, the elderly spend more time online during the day with more dispersed time utilization, unlike young people who tend to go online at night [4].

Secondly, the platforms used are centralized and the operational capabilities are relatively weak. The elderly prefer popular platforms that are easy to operate and have simple interfaces. Douyin, Kuaishou, wechat and Toutiao are the software they frequently use, and they rarely come into contact with niche professional apps. Due to the limitations of their educational level and physical conditions, the elderly have poor mobile phone operation skills. They are unable to set privacy permissions, identify pop-up advertisements, or understand the automatic deduction rules, making them prone to mistakenly clicking on consumption links. For instance, many elderly people unintentionally click on the hidden automatic renewal button on the platform and keep incurring charges without their knowledge, resulting in unnecessary consumption expenditures.

In addition, the ability to distinguish information is weak and it relies on the content of the platform. The social contact of the elderly has narrowed, and their information acquisition channels are limited. They lack the ability to distinguish the content pushed by new media platforms and are very likely to easily believe the remarks of bloggers and live-streamers. In life, many elderly people follow a large number of health bloggers and blindly believe in false claims such as "garlic can prevent cancer" and "folk remedies can cure diseases". Some even refuse to listen to their children's scientific advice and simply copy the health preservation methods in the videos, which poses health risks. Meanwhile, the elderly place great trust in recommendations from acquaintances and the language used in live-streaming rooms, making them easily swayed by emotional appeals into making purchases.

3.2. Online consumption characteristics of the elderly

First, consumption pursues practicality and has a prominent essential demand attribute. The elderly have a conservative and rational consumption concept. They abandon impulsive consumption and give priority to choosing essential products such as daily necessities, health products, grains, oils and foodstuffs, and small household appliances for online consumption. They rarely purchase luxury goods or trendy accessories. A 70-year-old grandma in Xiamen is addicted to online shopping and has purchased a large number of low-priced daily necessities. Although her consumption frequency is high, the unit price is relatively low. She pursues good quality at low prices. However, some of the products are of poor quality and lack practicality. In addition, the elderly pay attention to cost-effectiveness and prefer products with flash sales, coupons and low-price discounts in live-streaming rooms [5]. They are easily attracted by sales pitches such as "loss-making clearance sales" and "exclusive benefits".

Second, the proportion of emotional consumption is high, and emotional consumption is obvious. Elderly people living alone or in empty nests have strong emotional needs and long for companionship and attention. The gentle words of live-streaming hosts and the emotional copy in short videos can easily trigger emotional consumption among the elderly. A typical case is 73-year-old Mr. Chen. Over the past seven years, he has spent more than 100,000 yuan on live-streaming rewards for female streamers. His pension and alimony were all used for live-streaming rewards. He even had conflicts with his family due to consumption issues and was forced to live outside. In addition, some elderly people, in order to relieve their loneliness, recharge micro-short dramas and audio novels, spending thousands of yuan in a short period of time. Such emotional entertainment consumption has become an important part of online consumption for the elderly.

Third, consumption decisions are simple and possess strong conformity. The elderly lack the ability to make independent judgments, and their consumption decisions are easily influenced by live-streamers and their peers. In the live streaming room, when seeing other elderly people place orders and leave positive comments, they will follow suit and make purchases. Products recommended by peers around me are often purchased directly without discrimination. Simultaneously, the elderly have a high recognition of authoritative endorsements. Products with the words "Expert Recommendation" or "Official Certification" are more likely to gain the trust of the elderly. Even if the product price is relatively high and the quality is average, they will still choose to purchase it.

4. Existing problems and causes of new media marketing for the elderly

4.1. Main existing problems

At present, most enterprises' new media marketing content simply copies the marketing model for the younger generation, without customizing the content in line with the aesthetic preferences and demands of the elderly.

On the one hand, the video font is too small, the colors are too garish, and the switching speed is too fast, making it difficult for the elderly to adapt visually. On the other hand, marketing content is highly homogenized. Marketing templates for health preservation and daily necessities are all the same, and false and exaggerated promotion is rampant. For instance, various live-streaming rooms repeatedly push the same cheap health products, uniformly using phrases like "treating diseases and maintaining health" and "prolonging life". The content is rough and lacks scientific basis, failing to meet the high-quality consumption demands of the elderly. In addition, the threshold for the elderly consumer market is relatively low.

Unscrupulous merchants take advantage of the weak discrimination ability of the elderly to carry out false and fraudulent marketing. The common types can be divided into two categories: One is the fraud of false courses. Some elderly people are attracted by the advertisement of "making money by editing from scratch", and after paying nearly 3,000 yuan in tuition fees, the merchant goes out of contact directly, making it difficult to protect their rights. The second issue is false product promotion. Unbranded health products and inferior daily necessities exaggerate their efficacy, and live-streamers fabricate false user reviews to mislead the elderly into making purchases. Data "2" from the China Consumers Association shows that the number of complaints about false charges for micro-short dramas and false live-streaming sales has been increasing year by year, seriously reducing the trust of the elderly in new media marketing [6].

One of the existing problems is the high operational threshold of the platform and the poor consumer experience. The current interface design and functional Settings of new media platforms are all based on the standards of young people and have not been adapted to the physiological characteristics of the elderly. Limited font adjustment, dense pop-up advertisements, complex payment processes, and concealed refund channels make it very easy for the elderly to make mistakes. For instance, many platforms set automatic renewal as a hidden default mode, using the gimmick of "1-yuan experience" to entice the elderly to click, and automatically deduct a high fee upon expiration. Some inferior products have no after-sales guarantee. Elderly people do not understand the process of rights protection. If quality problems occur after placing an order, they cannot be returned or exchanged, resulting in a very poor consumption experience.

Finally, most enterprises lack precise marketing thinking, fail to segment the elderly group, and adopt a broad-net marketing push model. The platform algorithm only pushes similar content based on browsing records, resulting in an information cocoon. For instance, when an elderly person browses a health preservation video once, various health preservation advertisements are continuously pushed subsequently, but the content is monotonous and redundant. At the same time, merchants fail to distinguish the differentiated

needs of young, old, healthy and sick elderly people. All elderly users receive the same marketing content, resulting in a low marketing conversion rate and serious waste of resources.

4.2. Analysis of root causes

First of all, many enterprises underestimate the consumption capacity and consumption willingness of the elderly group, do not pay enough attention to the silver consumer market, and are unwilling to invest enough energy to carry out targeted market research and personalized marketing content creation.

Secondly, major new media platforms have loose daily content review mechanisms, and the punishment intensity for irregular merchants and false propaganda content is not enough. In order to pursue platform traffic benefits, some hidden bad marketing behaviors have not been effectively supervised and restrained.

Thirdly, the overall digital literacy level of the elderly group is uneven. Most seniors have not received systematic network safety education, lack basic anti-fraud awareness and standard online rights protection knowledge, and are in a passive defensive state in the whole network consumption environment.

Finally, the relevant industry management norms and special supervision laws and regulations targeting elderly digital consumption are not perfect enough, leading to low illegal cost of bad marketing behaviors, and it is difficult to form a long-term effective standardized management effect on the whole industry.

5. Optimization strategies of new media marketing for elderly groups

5.1. Enterprise level: create marketing content suitable for elderly needs

Enterprises should fully take the physical characteristics and living habits of the elderly as the starting point, optimize the form and expression mode of promotional content, use plain daily language to introduce product functions, slow down the video playback speed and enlarge the display text reasonably [7]. Merchants should adhere to honest business principles, completely abandon false exaggerated publicity, clearly mark product real information and complete after-sales service rules, and establish stable consumer trust with sincere service attitude.

At the same time, enterprises need to implement refined accurate marketing, divide elderly consumer groups according to age level, living environment and health status, and push matched commodities and service contents respectively, so as to greatly improve the conversion rate of elderly-oriented marketing.

5.2. Platform level: optimize elderly-oriented using functions and purify marketing environment

All major new media platforms need to further improve the exclusive elderly mode function, realize one-click simplification of page layout, automatically block useless pop-up advertisements and remind users repeatedly before deducting fees, so as to effectively avoid wrong deduction consumption problems [8]. The platform side should also strengthen the daily qualification review of settled merchants, strictly crack down on various false live broadcast sales behaviors, optimize intelligent recommendation algorithms, reduce the push proportion of homogeneous low-quality content, and create a clean network browsing environment for elderly users.

5.3. Supervision level: improve industry specifications and strengthen joint governance

The government departments have improved the relevant laws and regulations on digital consumption for the elderly, detailed the penalty standards for false marketing, hidden charges and live-streaming fraud, and clarified the responsibility division between platforms and merchants. Simplify the process for the elderly to

protect their rights, open a green channel for the elderly to protect their rights, and reduce the cost of rights protection. At the same time, standardize the industry standards of the silver-haired market, strictly control the quality of products for the elderly, and prevent inferior products from entering the online consumption market.

Market supervision, cyberspace administration, public security and other departments have launched joint rectification actions, regularly inspecting marketing content targeting the elderly on short-video and live-streaming platforms, and severely cracking down on illegal acts such as false fraud, malicious deduction of fees and inducement to offer rewards. Strengthen online inspection efforts, rely on big data to monitor abnormal consumption behaviors, issue early warnings for large-scale consumption and frequent deductions by the elderly, and promptly intercept illegal transactions. Regularly expose cases of unscrupulous merchants to serve as a warning.

5.4. Social level: popularize digital knowledge and build warm consumption atmosphere

Communities and public welfare organizations can regularly organize free network skill training courses for the elderly, teaching them practical skills such as distinguishing network false information and closing hidden automatic renewal functions. Family members should also take the initiative to guide the elderly around them to establish rational online consumption concepts, reduce impulsive consumption caused by emotional loneliness. The whole society should pay more attention to the digital life demands of the elderly, and jointly build a warm, safe and orderly silver digital consumption atmosphere.

6. Conclusion

In the current era of the integration of population aging and digitization, the scale of elderly Internet users continues to expand. New media has become an important carrier for elderly consumption, and the silver-haired digital consumption market has broad prospects for development. This article analyzes the new media usage habits and consumption characteristics of the elderly, and combines real life cases to find that the elderly group spends a long time online, has weak operational skills, low information discrimination ability, and their consumption tends to be practical and emotional. At present, new media marketing is confronted with problems such as poor content adaptability, rampant false marketing, high operational thresholds, and low marketing accuracy. These issues mainly stem from insufficient attention from enterprises, regulatory loopholes in platforms, low digital literacy among the elderly, and incomplete industry norms.

To promote the healthy development of new media marketing for the elderly, this paper combines the theory of consumer behavior and the theory of precision marketing, and proposes optimization strategies from four dimensions: enterprises, platforms, supervision, and society: enterprises optimize content, operate with integrity, and conduct precision marketing; The platform improves the elderly model and strengthens the review and control. The government improves regulations and intensifies supervision. Popularize digital knowledge in society and enhance humanistic care. Only through the concerted efforts of multiple parties can the digital consumption market for the elderly be regulated and their legitimate rights and interests be protected.

This article mainly focuses on case analysis, with limited research data. The study on the consumption differences among the elderly in different regions and with different educational backgrounds is not in-depth enough. In the future, on-site research and questionnaire surveys can be combined to refine the differentiated consumption characteristics of the elderly group. With the continuous development of artificial intelligence and big data technologies, new media marketing will become more intelligent and humanized in the future. We look forward to more enterprises focusing on the silver-haired market and creating gentle, safe and high-

quality marketing models specifically for the elderly group. With the joint efforts of all parties, the digital consumption market for the elderly will continue to develop in a standardized manner. The elderly will be able to enjoy a more comfortable and safe digital life, achieving a deep and healthy integration of new media marketing and the elderly group.

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