Research on the marketing effect of "unboxing" VLOG from the perspective of immersion

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Abstract: In recent years, short video platforms have transformed from the initial entertainment services to a symbiotic content ecosystem that includes live streaming and content payment. However, due to the fierce competition in the industry, such as the homogenization of content, the phenomenon continues to erode the industry environment, which has also led to a series of problems such as the decline of users' video viewing experience. With the emergence of this phenomenon, some short video creators choose to appear in front of people in the form of immersive "out-of-the-box" vlogs. This paper studies the phenomenon of immersive "unboxing" vlogs, cites the immersion theory after referring to relevant domestic and foreign literature, and conducts questionnaire distribution and data analysis on active user groups on social media, and the research data shows that the three independent variables of potential consumers' liking, immersion and detail of immersive "unboxing" vlogs show a significant positive correlation on purchase intention.
Keywords: Flow theory, unboxing vlog, willingness to buy, fan economy.

1 Introduction

With the advancement of Internet technology and the popularity of mobile terminals, social media platforms with short videos as the main carrier have entered the public life. In this context, ordinary users have been empowered to shoot and publish videos on this platform, and short videos have gradually become a way for the public to record their lives and even make a living. We have observed that on social platforms such as Xiaohongshu and Douyin, there are a group of creators who mainly publish "unboxed" vlogs of a product, most of them take first-hand shots as consumers, display the purchased goods in an all-round way and make evaluations or present the use effect. Most of these videos focus on niche products such as blind boxes and handbooks, and show a more obvious "planting" effect on the audience. In this regard, we are curious, what is the special effect of "immersive unboxing" vlog on consumers' purchase intention? What factors affect its marketing effectiveness on the product? And how is it affected?

2 Literature Review

2.1 "Unboxing" vlog

"Unboxing" vlog itself as a type of video blog, the initial purpose is to achieve the purpose

of product recording as a consumer's video maker, and then with the increasing influence of vlog on short video platforms, the publicity and consumption guidance function of vlog is gradually highlighted, attracting some video producers to transform their role from individual consumers to product promoters, and further purposefully adjust the "unbox" vlog to achieve better marketing effects. Therefore, the "out-of-the-box" vlog that has emerged in recent years is essentially a way of displaying products, that is, the visual presentation of products (Gonzalez, 2021).

At present, there are existing studies on the visual presentation of products, which divide product display methods into different categories from different angles. Foreign scholar Roggeveen (2015) divides product display methods into static presentation (pictures) and dynamic presentation (videos) according to the vividness theory. Yoo and Kim (2012) divide online product display methods into coordinated display and incongruous display according to the degree of coordination of product display. A coordinated display is when a product is displayed with other complementary items, while an uncoordinated display is when only a single product is displayed.

Regarding the impact of product display on purchase intention, the domestic Huang Jing (2017) study found that consumers have more positive evaluations of statically presented search products or dynamically presented experience products. In addition, factors such as consumer characteristics, product type, and brand type will regulate the impact of product display on purchase intention. Gong Yanping (2020) conducted research on the impact of the interaction effect of time accuracy and product display mode on product attitude, and found that for experience products, high time accuracy and matching of pictures of usage scenarios make consumers have more positive product attitudes; For search products, low time accuracy and product images make consumers have a more positive attitude towards the product. He Xueting (2020) research shows that warm brand display use scenario pictures will produce higher advertising click intention than displaying product pictures, and the ability brand product display method has no significant impact on advertising click intention.

2.2 Flow theory

The term Flow Theory was coined by M. Csikszentmihalyi in 1975, who further pointed out in 1988 that people do what they want according to psychological drives, and immersive experience is the manifestation of conscious motivation. He also believes that immersion experiences occur when challenges and skills are balanced. In other words, when the user's challenge and skill are balanced, the individual enters a state of immersion. In addition, immersion experiences are subjective and temporary, which is why individuals are willing to continue with certain activities. For flow, its definition has been deepening and developing, different researchers have reached a wonderful agreement at this time, researchers around the world believe that the most important thing about immersion experience is to be able to make the mood happy, and attention experience is generally obtained through certain skills, as well as the stability of challenges. Jackson and Roberts (1992) proposed through the study of immersive experiences in sports that the emotional feelings experienced in the mental process of making intrinsic rewards the goal itself are immersive experiences. Kimiecik and Stein (1992) argue that the immersive experience is the transformation process from difficulty and skill above one level to a balanced state of difficulty

and skill. Webster and Trevino (1993) argue that immersion is a temporary, subjective experience. Clarke and Haworth (1994) argue that when individuals experience a balance of challenge and skill, immersion is the feeling of transcending pleasure to reach complete satisfaction. Jackson and Mars (1996) Immersion is a very pleasant state of positive performance outcomes.

However, previous studies have not studied the marketing effect of "unboxing" vlogs from its perspective, so they have not answered questions about the impact of "unboxing" vlogs on potential consumers' purchase intentions.

In summary, this article will start from the immersion theory and try to answer the following questions: Will "immersive unboxing" vlogs affect the purchase intention of potential consumers? If so, what motivators caused it? How does an "immersive out-of-the-box" vlog work on marketing effectiveness through these drivers?

3 Method

3.1 hypotheses

Based on the above question, the corresponding assumptions are proposed here:

H1: The higher the love for the creator, the more likely consumers are to buy the product;

H2: The higher the audience viewing "immersive out-of-the-box" immersion, the more likely consumers are to buy the product;

H3: The more detailed the display of "immersive unboxing", the more consumers are inclined to buy the product;

To prove the hypothesis, this study used a questionnaire method, sampled the population, and produced questionnaires and scales. The first part of the questionnaire collects the basic information of the research subjects, and sets up identification questions; The second part uses a five-level Likert scale to measure the relevant independent and dependent variables, from "strongly disagreed" to "strongly agreed", using the Likert 5-point method for scoring, with "strongly disagreed" scoring 1 and "strongly agreed" scoring 5.

3.2 Study Subject

This hypothesis corresponds to the study of college students. The main reasons are as follows: First, it represents a group with some discretionary income, and it is a group of active social media users, which is highly representative. The second is that this group is more accessible to researchers and has strong operability.

The data collection, collation and analysis process of this survey was completed on February 13, 2023. The survey is mainly open-ended and closed-ended questions, and this questionnaire contains 12 questions, including 6 multiple-choice questions, 1 multiple-choice question and 11 scale questions. Using a combination of online and offline methods, through WeChat Moments, QQ Space, Questionnaire Star Sample Library and offline distribution, the questionnaire was officially distributed on April 1, 2023, which took 5 days to collect 233 questionnaires, and after

removing invalid questionnaires, 180 valid questionnaires were obtained, with an effective rate of 77.25%.

From the sample characteristics, the proportion of seniors, women, and respondents with a monthly living expenditure of 1000-2000 yuan was higher. 48.33% of the respondents were seniors; 68.89% were women and 31.11% were men; The monthly living expenses of 1000-2000 yuan accounted for 64.44%, and from the viewing scene, 55% of the respondents watched unboxing vlogs during the night break; Among the types of viewing of open-box vlogs, 69.4% of respondents viewed the evaluation comparison category.

4 Results

Because the relevant independent variables and dependent variables in this study are measured in the form of a five-level Likert scale, it is necessary to sum and average the measurement statements of the corresponding variables to generate the corresponding variables and include them in the subsequent analysis. Through descriptive analysis, it was found that the average preference of respondents for "unboxing" vlogs, the average immersion of watching "unboxing" vlogs was 3.6 points, the average perception of detail of the "unboxed" vlog introduced products they watched was 3.8 points, and the average purchase intention of the products they watched "unboxed" vlogs was 3.7 points.

Through the analysis of Pearson correlation coefficient, it is found that the independent variable favorability, immersion, fineness and purchase intention of the dependent variable all show a significant positive correlation, among which likability is significantly positively correlated with purchase intention ($r=0.567$, $P<0.01$), immersion is significantly positively correlated with purchase intention ($r=0.6$, $P<0.01$), and fineness is significantly positively correlated with purchase intention ($r=0.618$, $P<0.01$), which indicates that the higher the user's liking and immersion in the "unboxed" vlog they watch, the stronger the willingness to purchase the products in the video, and the more detailed and comprehensive the creator's introduction to the function, appearance, purchase channel and other information of the products in the video, the stronger the user's willingness to buy. The research hypothesis that H1, H2, and H3 are all supported.

5 Discussion

5.1 The popularity of creators is directly proportional to consumers' willingness to buy

Consumers often translate their liking for creators into liking for the products they promote. Through the above research, the author found that the average consumer's liking for "unboxed" vlog creators was 3.9 points, and the Pearson correlation coefficient was ($r=0.567$, $P<0.01$) had a significant positive impact on purchase intention. It is worth mentioning that consumers, especially young consumers, may pay more attention to the appearance, personality, personal charm, etc. of the anchor, and these factors may be more likely to stimulate consumers' willingness to buy. Consumer chasing and interactive writing shows that there is a fan economy between consumers

and creators, fan economy is a business operation model that obtains economic and social benefits through improving user stickiness and word-of-mouth marketing, in addition, fans are willing to spend a lot of time and energy on their favorite objects in order to meet their personal emotional needs. Their unpaid labor constitutes the main source of value for the networked new economy. At present, the user-led Web 2.0 model mostly relies on fans (users) to contribute popularity, traffic and content. The "eyeballs" and "saliva" of fans have become the key factors in the development and growth of "out of the box" vlog. Creators gather friends and fans through a certain point of interest, provide fans with diversified and personalized products and services, and finally convert them into consumption and achieve profits.

5.2 Immersion directly affects consumers' willingness to buy a product

When consumers are immersed in watching "out of the box" vlog, consumers are more willing to buy products. Mu Sheng, a postdoctoral fellow in business administration at Guanghua School of Management, Peking University, believes that creators, users, and products are based on scene interaction, and it is necessary to form a "field" according to the plot controlled by the established script to facilitate a large number of transactions. These artificially created scenes, on the one hand, cater to the curiosity of consumers, on the other hand, it is also the key to distinguishing the field of live broadcast room from other fields. Through the above research, the author found that the average immersion of consumers to "unbox" vlog is 3.6 points, and the Pearson correlation coefficient is ($r=0.6$, $P<0.01$) has a direct impact on purchase intention. Early immersion theory believed that challenges and skills were the main elements affecting immersion, and if the challenge goal was too high, the test subject would feel unable to control the environment, resulting in anxiety or frustration; If the challenge goal is too low, the test subject will feel bored, and the immersion is in a state of balance and harmony between the two, and the factor that can ensure this balance and harmony is skill. By mastering this technique, the creators of "out-of-box" vlogs artificially create scenes that can immerse consumers, thereby directly affecting consumers' willingness to buy products.

5.3 The more detailed the "unboxing" vlog display, the stronger the consumer's willingness to buy

Creators can more conveniently display product information through "unboxing" vlogs, and the more detailed the product information display, the stronger the consumer's willingness to buy. Through the above research, the author found that the average perceptual value of the detail of the "unboxed" vlog introduced products watched by users was 3.8 points, and the Pearson correlation coefficient was ($r=0.618$, $P<0.01$) has a significant positive impact on purchase intention, and after testing, we conclude that the more detailed the "unboxing" vlog display, the stronger the consumer's purchase intention. Usually, the better the carrier shows the appearance of the product, the more complete the introduction of the product function, the more detailed the guarantee of the product sales channel such as the manufacturer, delivery timeliness and other issues, the stronger

the consumer's willingness to buy, but it is worth noting that the more information displayed, the longer the "unboxing" vlog, and the creator needs to let consumers immerse themselves in watching the "unboxed" vlog during this time to enhance consumers' willingness to buy.

6 Conclusion

This study studies the relationship between "unboxing" vlogs and potential consumers' purchase intentions through immersion theory through questionnaire survey method, and attempts to answer the following questions: Does "immersive unboxing" vlogs affect potential consumers' purchase desire? If so, what motivators caused it? How does an "immersive out-of-the-box" vlog work on marketing effectiveness through these drivers?

The study finds that H1/H2/H3 are all true. This is mainly because Pearson correlation coefficient analysis shows that the independent variable favorability, immersion, fineness and purchase intention of the dependent variable show a significant positive correlation. When video creators maintain a good interactive atmosphere with users, and users have a high degree of love for video creators, it will attract users' attention and stimulate their curiosity; When the user watches the video with enough immersion, it can make the user stay longer; When video creators display product information in more detail in their videos, users will learn more about the product. Therefore, likability, immersion and meticulousness are important factors for potential consumers to immerse themselves in watching "unboxed" volg, and only careful control and good viewing experience can better capture users, and then promote the generation of consumers' purchase intention.

On the one hand, this study shows the development of the phenomenon of "out-of-the-box" vlogs and immersive communication with potential consumers. On the other hand, it also provides a reference for its short video e-commerce in the context of new media in modern China, and provides a certain reference significance for further research on "immersive unboxing" vlogs in the future, but due to my own limited knowledge level, limited energy, limited access to data resources and other factors, this study still has the following shortcomings to be developed and improved: (1) Limited by the student status of the research subject, there may be low income level or insufficient social experience, etc. Further data will be collected in follow-up studies for further study. (2) The research method is more limited, the questionnaire survey method is affected by individual differences, which may affect the accuracy of the measurement results, and in future research, more research methods such as interview method, psychological experience sampling method and other research methods are needed to deeply analyze the relationship between "immersive unboxing" vlog and potential consumers' purchase intention.

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