Achieve a Rapid Breakthrough for Emerging Chinese Local Brands—Take Adopt a Cow for Example

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Abstract:

In the Chinese dairy industry market, emerging brands Adopt a cow and start to show their prominence, Successfully achieved a breakthrough in the Red Sea Market of dairy products. Its unique branding, marketing strategy, and digital transformation have given it a significant advantage in a highly competitive market. This article focuses on the marketing strategy behind the brand's success and provides an in-depth analysis of its business model innovation. By differentiating itself, Adopt a Cow successfully attracts consumer attention and successfully markets its own product. In terms of marketing strategy, the brand skillfully uses storytelling and the concept of "adoption" as the starting point to arouse consumers' consumption emotions and let the story gradually penetrate into the hearts of consumers. At the same time, combined with social media marketing, it can achieve in-depth interaction with consumers. In terms of digital transformation, Adopt a Cow uses Internet technology to create an online adoption platform, allowing consumers to participate in the entire process of dairy cow raising, care, and dairy production, enhancing consumer stickiness. It has also built a large-scale digital and intelligent chemical factory to strictly control product quality.

Keywords: branding, brand differentiation, marketing, digitalization.

1. Introduction

With the development of the times and the progress of science and technology, it has become one of the focuses of social attention in terms of food safety and product manufacturing. The rise of Adopt a Cow also proves that in the era of digital transformation, emerging brands should break down market barriers through marketing strategies, innovative marketing models, and actively adapting to digitalization. Xu Xiaobo, the founder of the brand, through a series of innovations, jumping out of the inherent model, and insisting on the high quality of dairy products, the brand quickly attracted a large number of loyal cus-

tomers and achieved a large number of user accumulation. His precise delivery and the construction of a multi-level membership system, as well as innovative interactive forms such as "cloud cattle breeding", have set a new benchmark for the dairy industry. This article mainly reviews the Adopt of a cow by a local Chinese brand as an example.

At present, most of the literature has explained the brand's online and offline marketing strategies in great detail. Most of them focus on the brand's online marketing methods, there is little discussion about some of the marketing strategies made by the brand itself. For example, multi-faceted brand matrix, good at using story marketing. In addition, the success of this brand can also bring inspiration to local Chinese brands on how to market themselves as emerging brands.In this article, we will use literature analysis, case studies and other research methods to explore.

The purpose of this article is to provide an in-depth analysis of the successful path of Adopt a Cow in order to provide a reference for the development of other brands and even other fields. Through these studies, it is not only about understanding the specific strategies for the success of Adopt a cow but also about the general theories that can be applied to the industry as a whole and beyond.

2. Adopt a cow for branding

2.1 Tell Good Brand Stories

The brand story and brand concept of Adopt a cow are the foundation of its success, and a good brand story can better resonate with consumers and form a close connection between consumers and the brand. The first story of Adopt a cow appeared at the beginning of the brand's existence. The brand's founder, Xu Xiaobo, wanted to bring back a few cans of milk powder from Hong Kong for his children because he was worried about the quality of local dairy products in China, but was seized by customs.

Since then, he has had the idea of building his own dairy brand. One of the most distinctive features is the "Cloud Cattle" system, whose vision is to enable consumers to participate directly in the milk production process, thereby increasing trust in the product and at the same time, giving consumers more peace of mind.

The Adopt a cow brand concept focuses on "sharing high-quality milk with consumers", which breaks the traditional product-centric marketing model of the dairy industry and instead emphasizes interaction and engagement with consumers. The brand story revolves around the farm, the cow, and the milk production process. Through the concept of "adopt", the consumer is no longer just a

buyer of the goods but becomes a part of the life of the farm. This emotional engagement makes the consumer feel in control of the quality of the milk, thereby strengthening their loyalty to the brand.

Adopt a cow promotes your brand through storytelling. By sharing the brand concept with consumers, Adopt a cow attracts many like-minded consumers, who form a community of shared values, which plays a positive role in promoting brand loyalty and word-of-mouth. The Adopt a cow brand story and philosophy is at the heart of its branding, which successfully transforms consumers from product buyers to participants and communicators of the brand story through emotional connection, storytelling, and interactive engagement. This innovative brand strategy not only attracts a large number of consumers but also sets a new benchmark for the dairy industry, inspiring other companies to build a strong and lasting brand impact through storytelling and UX innovation[1].

2.2 Create a Product Matrix in an All-round Way

The layout of the whole industry chain of Adopt a Cow presents a new picture. The dairy industry involves the primary, secondary, and tertiary industries, and how to carry out the layout of the whole industry tests the determination to Adopt a cow. Since 2014, adopting a cow has been down-to-earth, starting from cattle raising, and has successively laid out 7 modern large-scale pastures and 2 intelligent manufacturing bases across the country[2].

Adopt a cow isn't just about producing one type of milk, they've created a range of different product categories over the years. At the same time, with the change of the times, consumers' demand for dairy products has shown diversification, and then the product structure of China's dairy products has gradually shown a variety of functions. In addition to the most basic nutritional pursuits, consumers also want a wider variety of dairy products to buy, and "Adopt a cow" is highly flexible in terms of function, providing different products according to the different needs of consumers[3]. This can not only meet the differentiated needs of consumers, but also adapt to the different purchasing power of various consumers, and at the same time improve the value of products and develop towards building a high-quality dairy brand.

3.Marketing strategy for Adopt a cow

3.1 Target Market and Consumer

The success of Adopt a cow in the dairy market is largely due to its precise grasp of the target market and consumer needs. Only by understanding the consumer deeply can an effective marketing strategy be developed.

Adopt a cow is targeted at middle-class consumers who have a high demand for healthy, high-quality dairy products, especially young families and urban people who are concerned about quality of life. This group usually has high requirements for the source and quality of food and is willing to pay extra for it, which coincides with the high-quality concept of Adopt a cow. At the same time, they use social media more frequently and have a high acceptance of novel marketing methods and story-based brand communication methods, which provides the basis for the storytelling and social media marketing strategy of Adopt a cow. Recognising the need for product transparency, the brand has enabled consumers to witness the cow feeding process and milk production through online adoption platforms and ranch open days, strengthening consumers' trust in product quality and enhancing the brand's credibility.

Adopt a cow adopts a consumer-centric strategy in target market and consumer analysis, through a deep understanding of consumer needs, creating an emotional brand experience and combining big data analysis to achieve product and service personalization. This strategy successfully established a unique competitive advantage in the Chinese dairy market.

3.2 Create Differentiation

First of all, leading dairy brands such as Mengniu and Yili account for a large proportion of the dairy industry, but in reality, their own farms only supply about 25% of the milk, and they still need to collect milk from contract farms and milk stations to maintain a normal supply. Adopt a cow adopts the business strategy of building its own ranch, not only importing a variety of dairy cows from abroad, but also spending huge sums of money to build its own modern pasture, which is different from traditional farming, adopting a cow through the fine breeding of dairy cows, bringing high-quality dairy products to consumers[3].

Adopt a cow promotes the slogan of raising cattle for customers, and launches the Adopt a cow Community Engagement Program, where consumers can adopt cows and receive milk directly from the pasture. Through the marketing and communication of self-media, the brand image is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. Then, Adopt a cow to launch two adoption models, one is to spend 2999 yuan to Adopt a cow, you can Adopt a cow; The other is to become a ranch joint rancher and obtain the rights and interests of the brand, but it costs 10,000 yuan, and you can even share the ranch dividend.Later, Adopt a cow changed the rules of the activity and launched cloud adoption, real-name adoption and joint adoption. Bring new

consumers on board by creating an adopt-a-cow community. Although this approach has been criticized by some consumers, it brings great value to adopting a cow[4].

Previously, big brands such as Yili and Mengniu sold through offline retail, but now they are slowly turning to online live sales.However, the digital transformation of Adopt a cow is largely achieved through e-commerce platforms and new retail models, which has brought significant growth and market advantages to brands. In the selection of e-commerce platforms, the brand keenly captured the potential of Internet sales, actively settled in mainstream e-commerce platforms such as Tmall and JD.com, and carried out precision marketing through social media platforms such as Xiaohongshu, Douyin, and Weibo, rapidly expanding its brand influence.

On platforms such as Tmall and JD.com, Adopt a Cow carefully builds an official flagship store to attract consumers' attention with a unified brand vision and rich product display. With the big data analysis capabilities of e-commerce platforms, brands can deeply understand consumer behavior and shopping habits, so as to optimize marketing strategies, deliver targeted ads, and improve efficiency. At the same time, Adopt a Cow cleverly combines the e-commerce platform with the brand story, and allows consumers to deeply experience the brand story during the shopping process through vivid page design and interactive elements. They have a video of the cow breeding and a link to the adoption platform on the product detail page, so that consumers can easily participate in the online adoption interaction, and this unique shopping experience has attracted many consumers. Through the in-depth operation of the e-commerce platform and the innovation of the new retail model, Adopt a Cow has successfully converted online traffic into actual sales, and also expanded offline sales channels to achieve omni-channel coverage.This online and offline integrated sales strategy not only improved sales efficiency, but also enhanced brand awareness, enabling Adopt a cow to achieve rapid growth in the dairy market.

Adopt a cow also cooperates with different IPs in multiple fields to increase visibility and create added value.For example, the breakfast gift package was jointly launched with Wang baobao, and the divine beast guardian card was jointly launched with Dunhuang Culture[3].A series of co-branded activities not only increased the sales of the product, but also let more consumers of other brands know about the brand of Adopt a cow, attracting more potential customers and expanding sales channels.

4.Problems in Development

Adopt a cow is marketed through a variety of different channels, which seems to increase the promotion of the product, and at the same time, the amount of money re-

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quired is very high. Although the annual sales of adopting a cow have reached 2 billion yuan, it has not yet truly achieved profitability. Because most of its cost is spent on the traffic expenses of the e-commerce platform, the cost of customer acquisition is high and the marketing investment is large. Although Adopt a cow has a variety of products for different groups of people, its offline distribution channels are very limited, such as children's growth milk powder, which is difficult to buy in offline stores except for some specific distributors. In terms of price, some consumers pointed out that compared with brands such as Mengniu, and Yili, some products that Adopt a cow are high in price and low in cost performance, so they are not worth buying.

Although Adopt a cow has been promoting its free pasture, there are still many media outlets revealing that this brand has OEM and purchased milk. In addition, Adopt a cow, the most famous cloud cattle, has now faded in popularity and is rarely publicized.In the future development, Adopt a cow should focus on the sales of offline stores, reduce online publicity, save costs, or give up some products with poor profitability functions. Reuse the advantages of cloud cattle breeding to enhance customer loyalty[5].

5. Conclusion

This article delves into the key factors that set the brand apart in the competitive dairy market, including unique branding, innovative marketing strategies, and digital transformation. The story-based marketing strategy of Adopt a cow builds a strong brand identity through emotional connection and consumer engagement, allowing it to establish a strong position in the target market. Through the concept of "adoption", brands have achieved deep interaction with consumers on social media, closely connecting products with consumers, thereby improving consumers' trust in products. Other emerging companies can also learn from the success of Adopt a cow and adapt to the fierce market competition by creating a variety of differentiation, emotional connection and digital means, as well as innovative marketing. Overall, the success of Adopt a cow is a model of innovation and development in China's dairy industry, and it has a far-reaching impact on the industry and can be a learning object for future emerging companies.

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