

The Impact of Integrated Digital Marketing on Brand Growth: Nike

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Abstract:

The concept of digital marketing began in the 1990s, experienced the millennial generation, the mobile era, and now, the industry continues to grow, and there are more new developments and changes. This model of communicating information through digital channels to further promote sales is disrupting and gradually replacing traditional marketing as the core strategic framework of enterprises. In order to achieve better growth results, how to effectively integrate different digital marketing channels and maintain a high degree of brand consistency is the focus of this essay. This essay takes the world-famous sports brand NIKE as an example to analyze its most important integrated digital marketing strategy. It mainly includes search engine marketing, video content marketing, social media marketing and influencer marketing. In addition, this article measures the impact of NIKE's integrated digital marketing strategy on brand growth i.e., brand awareness, customer engagement, sales, and specifically mentions the importance of corporate social responsibility through the disabled-friendly series. Finally, SWOT model is used to summarize the challenges faced by brands under external competitive pressure and complex market environment and suggestions are made for the future development direction of the brand, specifically shown in the article for information consistency and data privacy analysis.

Keywords: Integrated digital marketing; search engine marketing; video content marketing; social media marketing; influencer marketing.

1. Introduction

Digital marketing strategy constitutes a key decision for enterprises to use a variety of network tools to promote product sales and achieve marketing goals.

This strategy focuses on in-depth analysis of consumer behavior, relying on data analysis to optimize marketing and enhance effectiveness. Search engine marketing (SEM) plays a central role by deploying paid advertising to expand brand visibility and attract

potential attention. Content marketing provides high-quality information aimed at building an emotional connection between users and brands; Social media marketing, on the other hand, uses social media platforms directly to promote products. The fundamental advantages of digital marketing are its highly interactive characteristics and the accuracy of customer positioning, which can reduce resource consumption, expand publicity, and enhance customer participation more efficiently than traditional marketing approaches.

Taking Nike as an example, despite the existence of competitors such as Adidas, Puma, and Under Armour in the market, Nike still relies on pioneering digital marketing strategies and brand recognition to maintain its leading position in the global market. Nike not only relies on Air Max, Flyknit and other exclusive technology product lines to maintain its market dominance, but also implements the integrated channel strategy of online and offline integration, such as “innovation home” stores and “Nike Live” concept stores, to effectively enhance consumer loyalty. Mobile apps and innovative retail environment designs of Nike, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies, create unique shopping experiences for consumers, which further strengthen the brand image and strongly drive market share expansion.

Nike also worked with sports elite and KOLs to strengthen its brand influence, with iconic slogans such as ‘Just Do It’, Nike effectively attracted the attention of many young consumers. Brands use data analysis tools to interact with social media platforms to achieve accurate targeting of target customers, thereby improving consumer brand loyalty. In addition, Nike also actively practice corporate citizenship, through the launch of the FlyEase series of shoes designed for people with disabilities, greatly improving its positive image in the eyes of the public.

This essay systematically analyzes Nike’s strategic deployment in the field of integrated digital marketing. The research focuses on three core dimensions: search engine marketing (SEM), content marketing strategies, and social media marketing practices, while incorporating examples of Nike’s corporate social responsibility and brand building to analyze how these diversified marketing strategies integrate to enhance brand growth and maintain a competitive advantage. Finally, the SWOT model is used to reveal how Nike relies on cross-channel synergies and continuous technological innovation to ensure market dominance while analyzing existing opportunities to promote the long-term development of the brand.

2. Integrated Digital Marketing Strategy: Nike

2.1 SEM-Search Engine Marketing

SEM is the most trusted, reliable and widely used form of digital paid promotion, and customers can use SEM for free by managing keywords [1]. SEM can mainly be divided into paid search marketing (PPC) and search engine optimization (SEO), where PPC is closely tied to a specific keyword or phrase in search engine results. Keywords of NIKE are mainly in the form of brand name + related phrases, such as NIKE sportswear, and for general keywords such as sportswear, NIKE does not have a good display effect. In addition, many ads marked as sponsored links are usually displayed at the top and right, and account for one-quarter to one-half of clicks [2]. They usually belong to third parties and not brands. In addition, using effective keywords to write compelling copy and optimize landing pages can also better achieve the maximum conversion rate and click through rate (CTR). This type of customer has a strong willingness to buy and specific purchase ideas, so that it has a high conversion rate, and the cost and competition are low. In addition to PPC, NIKE also uses effective SEO strategies to improve its ranking and position in natural search results, of which three core parts are technical optimization, page optimization, and off-site optimization. As Sem Crush shows that in July 2024, NIKE.com had nearly 130M visits, nearly 7 minutes average stay time, and nearly 5 pages were viewed, which also means that Nike focuses on SEO to obtain more natural traffic, customers, credibility through optimization, and long-term online visibility [3].

2.2 Content Marketing –Video

As defined by the Content Marketing Institute, content marketing is a strategic marketing approach that focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain audiences and ultimately drive profitable customer action. Compared to other marketing methods such as paid advertising, valuable content does not annoy customers. Hillebrand also points out that content marketing is used as an alternative to building relationships with users rather than simply informing them about new products and promotions [4].

This article first focuses on video content, which is also the core of Nike’s content marketing plan, by creating visual dynamic content such as brand stories, product introductions, fast-paced short videos to further help brands

attract audience's attention, convey information, and establish emotional connection. Nike often posts some story-telling videos on the YOUTUBE platform that feature athletes or show the performance of the product series, such as Kobe Bryant and the story of Air Max. The video titled You Can't Stop Us released by Nike in 2020 shows the spirit of perseverance and never retreat by telling the struggle experience of famous athletes, which can not only inspire the audience and resonate, but also further reflect the brand's mission-just do it and build a strong emotional connection with customers. Additionally, Nike will also make detailed videos for its innovation parts and products, such as Flyknit Technology, aiming not only to differentiate itself from competitors to produce advantages, but also to show customers how products can provide better support for specific sports from the source. This kind of content is very friendly to consumers who have a clear purchase goal, and from another point of view, it can also be well combined with long-tail keywords. Nike also uses social media platforms for short video releases. For example, on Instagram, Nike recently made use of the hot topics of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games to released short videos on the theme of athletes with disabilities by using fast-paced background music and fast editing techniques, prompting customers to make comments, which not only improved participation and expanded influence, but also further expanded potential customer segmentation and drive traffic to the new Fly Ease product line.

2.3 Social Media Marketing Strategy (SMMS) – Content & Marketing

NIKE not only regards social media as an important channel for its content marketing, but also a key component of its integrated digital marketing strategy to increase user engagement and promote community building through personalized interactions. Brand researchers believe that community building strategies in social media will bring more brand loyalty and customer trust [5]. However, it is important to distinguish that although social media mar-

keting is widely used, it is more promotional and intrusive than content marketing. The premise of social media content marketing is to create brand awareness, stimulate interaction, and spread positive word of mouth through viral content dissemination [6]. In Nike, in addition to the basic use of social media platforms to publish promotional and activity information, increase heat, improve sales, expand influence, Nike also actively encourage users to share experience on social media by using specific tags such as #nikewomen, and re-share them to give users brand recognition or corresponding benefits, which is also called user-generated content (UGC). it enhances the diversity of brands' content in social media and enhances affinity and authenticity. Similarly, Nike also actively responds to comments and questions on social platforms, with a high level of interaction. As Li et al. mentioned that enterprises exchange resources owned by customers through valuable content, such as network assets and persuasion capital, to generate positive word-of-mouth and obtain sustainable credible status [7].

Therefore, based on high-quality social media content creation, the key to social media marketing is how to accurately select social media platforms and make reasonable use of their characteristics to accurately target and reach different consumer segmentation. Nike caters to the needs of consumers around the world, targeting people regardless of age, gender, income and occupation, which is aimed at many people who have the pursuit of sports, fashion and innovation. Therefore, Nike fully understands different audience groups, and further selects the platform that it is most likely to use according to demographic data to customize specific marketing plans and business types. As shown in Table 1, 2, and 3, GWI data respectively indicate the preference of different gender and different age groups for social media platforms, as well as the reasons why people choose to use that. Nike has also created independent matrix accounts for different segmentation on social media to help brands efficiently analyze background data to better meet consumer preferences and needs.

Table 1. Favourite social media platform based on female internet users in 2024 [8]

Favourite social media platform based on female internet users - 2024					
Social Platform	AGE 16-24	AGE 25-43	AGE 35-44	AGE 45-54	AGE 55-64
INSTAGRAM	26.8%	20.7%	15.5%	12.8%	9.2%
FACEBOOK	6.5%	11.8%	13.6%	14.8%	17.2%
TIKTOK	15.0%	10.2%	7.3%	6.3%	4.8%
X(TWITTER)	3.3%	2.4%	1.7%	1.8%	1.5%

Table 2. Favourite social media platform based on male internet users in 2024 [8]

Favourite social media platform based on male internet users- 2024					
Social Platform	AGE 16-24	AGE 25-43	AGE 35-44	AGE 45-54	AGE 55-64
INSTAGRAM	27.0%	18.4%	12.0%	9.1%	6.8%
FACEBOOK	8.3%	14.5%	15.6%	16.4%	18.4%
TIKTOK	9%	6.1%	5.5%	5.0%	3.5%
X(TWITTER)	3.9%	4.5%	3.7%	3.7%	3.1%

Table 3. % using different social media platforms for different activities is based on age 16+ in 2024 [8]

% using different social media platforms for different activities is based on age 16+ - 2024					
Social Platform	look for funny or entertaining content	follow or research brands and products	keep up to date with news and current events	message friends and family	post or share photos or videos
INSTAGRAM	66.3%	62.7%	54.5%	59.7%	69.8%
FACEBOOK	54.7%	53.0%	58.2%	72.4%	63.2%
TIKTOK	79.5%	48.0%	41.4%	18.9%	39.7%
X(TWITTER)	36.4%	36.4%	60.6%	17.0%	29.6%

2.4 Influencer Marketing

By creating close relationships with famous sports stars and online influencers, NIKE has built strong brand influence, further driving sales and increasing awareness. For example, the partnership between Michael Jordan and Nike revolutionized athlete endorsements. Moreover, the influence of the brand is not limited to the initial basketball events, but also involves entertainment, street, lifestyle, etc. From the release of AJ1 in 1985 to the end of that year, the Jordan brand has brought more than 100 million US dollars in revenue for Nike [9]. To be clear in this essay, influencer marketing is not the same as celebrity endorsements, although they are similar. By partnering with social media influencers who align with the brand's values, Nike allows the brand to reach the public more broadly and be more authentic to life. Influencers tend to have more empathy with consumers than celebrities. 85.4% of respondents believe that social media has an impact on purchasing behavior [10]. Therefore, by following or browsing their favorite influencers and stars, these people also indirectly join the different community systems Nike has established on social media platforms to fully meet the needs of different people.

2.5 Cross-platform Integration

How to effectively integrate different digital marketing channels together and maintain the consistency of information is the key to integrated digital marketing, and it

also determines whether the brand growth effect of 1+1>2 can be achieved. Nike's most important digital transformation is focused on providing a seamless omnichannel experience. Information consistency is a necessary prerequisite for synergistic communication, customer satisfaction and brand revenue [11]. This high consistency of information can bring consumers a seamless good shopping experience, strengthen brand recognition, improve the consumer shopping journey, and avoid consumer confusion. For example, when the new product series is launched, Nike will synchronously promote it in its official website, social media, advertising and other channels, and strictly ensure the consistency of information and expand the coverage of the product line.

Nike's biggest achievement in digital analytics in recent years to drive a seamless experience has been its transformation from a traditional business to a technology-driven DTC enterprise, which benefits from its rich application system such as NIKE TRAINING CLUB, NIKE FIT, and NIKE APP. In order to make better use of applications to generate and collect data, in 2018, Nike acquired Zodiac, and the following year, acquired the demand awareness analysis platform Celect to better understand consumption habits for forecasting, facilitate personalized product recommendations, and optimize inventory in an omnichannel environment [12]. Nike's entire data analysis system is unmatched by other competitors and makes the customer experience not tightly around the purchase, but also permeates daily life, and truly realizes the integration of mar-

keting and operations.

3. The Impact of Integrated Digital Marketing on Brand Growth -Nike

3.1 Strategy of Brand Expansion on Social Media and through Digital Partnerships by Nike

Nike has successfully reached millions of consumers through its strategic use of social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. For example, in the last three months, the brand posted 58 posts on Instagram, generating more than 8.8 million interactions [13]. It means that the content is highly engaging. In addition, Nike also strengthened its market influence through a variety of digital channels, especially the 'Airphoria' campaign in cooperation with Fortnite. The event combines gaming and fashion elements, aiming for a wider audience of young and gaming enthusiasts. This innovative marketing model has become a hot topic on social media, prompting many potential consumers to recognize Nike through the window of game cooperation, effectively promoting the brand to expand the market, but also greatly enhance the appeal to consumers.

3.2 Nike Cooperate with Celebrities & Customized Help

Digital marketing strategy of Nike focuses on generating engaging content with the aim for deepening brand recognition and strengthening the connection with consumers. By cooperating with celebrities and athletes, Nike promotes brand influence, customer brand loyalty and more efficient interaction. For example, Nike has partnered with highly influential public figures such as Billie Eilish. These collaborations not only become an effective strategy to attract new users, but also provide Nike with strong market segmentation data support, further expanding its potential customer base. In addition, the two main applications developed by Nike, "Nike Training Club" and "Nike Running Club", customize exercise goals, training guidelines and record progress according to each user's personal characteristics [12]. These apps promote the long-term interaction between users and Nike, not only actually help the fitness process of users, but also deepen

the consumer loyalty to the brand, so as to more effective data analysis, accurate product recommendations, but also for Nike to tap more potential markets.

3.3 Direct Marketing Strategy of Nike for Consumer

Nike has employed numerous tactics to make its market operations more effective, with particular emphasis on the direct to consumer (DTC) model and on the market. Online platform of Nike is strategically built to facilitate a non-interrupted purchasing process by the consumer. This measure significantly shortens the distance between consumers and brands, while the platform also prepares personalized product recommendations for users. It regularly rolls out limited-edition products, a strategy that has proven to annoy customers. According to statistics, in 2020, digital channel sales of Nike rose to \$5.5 billion, a significant increase compared with the previous year [14]. This data proves that Nike is using digital technology to broaden its customer base and increase revenue. Nike further uses data analysis technology to develop personalized promotion programs for specific user groups, which is based on the analysis of user data to clarify the preferences of different groups, making marketing communications more accurate, to further enhance the potential for consumption transformation. Nike is also committed to providing a customized shopping experience, which greatly enhances user satisfaction and drives higher transaction completion rates.

3.4 CSR of Nike - Vulnerable Groups with Disabilities

In product marketing, Nike is committed to showing its values of social inclusion and corporate social responsibility, which is followed by an increase in consumer goodwill towards the brand. A prominent example is the launch of the Flyease series of shoes, which are designed to greatly facilitate consumers with special physical conditions or disabilities, and this move has shaped Nike's diversified brand image in the eyes of the public with good CSR. This series has been widely positive evaluation by the public, has a positive effect on Nike's brand reputation, and has also improved the new market feasibility of Nike.

4. Challenges and Development Direction: SWOT

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global influence and brand value • Diversified products • Diverse content creation • Celebrity athletes endorse and cooperate with influencer • Advanced data analysis capability • Innovation culture • Multi-channel integration and consistency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media platform rules change • Digital marketing costs are high • Data privacy protection
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitalization and the continuous development of innovative technologies • Corporate social responsibility • Global Market Expansion: Africa... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fierce market competition • Instability in the global economy • Digital technologies and trends are constantly changing • Changes in consumer preferences

Fig. 1 SWOT of Nike’s integrated digital marketing strategy

In summary, according to the above analysis of the impact of integrated digital marketing plan on Nike brand growth, although Nike has a great influence on the global scale and rich experience in integrated digital marketing, it still faces some challenges and weaknesses that cannot be ignored. Therefore, figure 1 summarizes the development of Nike brand growth according to the SWOT model, and extracts the most critical two points in figure 1 for further analysis.

Firstly, in the integration strategy, the most critical is to maintain the consistency of multi-channel information, although Nike has done a better job in this respect, but there will still be omissions. In 2020, for example, with the Black Lives Matter campaign in the spotlight, many well-known brands and businesses have spoken out alongside the protesters. Nike is no exception, through the rapid release of social media video ads with the theme of Don’t Do It, calling the masses against racial prejudice and inequality, and triggered a strong discussion, but in fact they were accused of hypocrisy, to increase brand awareness. Nike’s official website and APP did not update the relevant content in time and could not find the support given by the relevant products. It is obvious that this inconsistency of multi-channel information leads to consumers’ questioning of the brand and further affects the overall image of the brand. In order to avoid this problem, Nike needs to pay more attention to this in the future and ensure that a unified and powerful message is delivered across all digital channels.

In addition, in order to protect the privacy and security of consumers, to ensure that the collection and use of information is transparent, legal, and stored without disclosure,

many countries have formulated relevant regulations. Collecting consumer data through digital marketing channels is an important prerequisite for brands to successfully target the customers, make personalized recommendations and accurately launch products that meet consumer needs. The promulgating of these regulations makes Nike need to enforce these obligations, which increases the difficulty in data processing and analysis, and becomes the weakness of brand integrated digital marketing, as shown in figure 1. Although Nike has not had a similar incident, if not handled in time, the related data privacy security incident may have an irreversible impact on brand reputation and consumer trust. For example, Kovacs pointed out that in July of that year, Estee Lauder admitted that a third party had hacked into its systems and obtained data, which significantly affected its operations and brand reputation, and that 440 million records had been exposed on the Internet as early as 2020 [15]. Therefore, based on Nike’s analysis of the data in its own mobile applications, Nike can also strengthen data protection technology through acquisitions and investments, and show consumers its data collection methods in a relatively transparent way, thus strengthening consumer confidence.

Looking to the future, as digital marketing technologies rapidly update and consumer preferences and trends continue to change, this paper also shows the direction Nike can expand in its integrated digital marketing program based on SWOT model analysis. Firstly, in the development and innovation of technology, Nike can increase its investment in innovation and research and development of emerging technologies. NALBANT and AYDIN point out that businesses need to invest in the meta-universe, artifi-

cial intelligence, and various forms of digital technology to expand marketing awareness, expand customer portfolios, increase competitiveness, and occupy the leading position [16]. For example, Nike can make full use of AI technology to accurately analyze consumer behavior, interests, and purchase records, to better meet consumer needs, or personalized customized products and services. Similarly, Nike can also expand the use of VR and AR technology, especially in its mobile application, through virtual fitting to improve consumer shopping convenience, enhance consumer satisfaction, and increase customer participation in the community. Similarly, the establishment of AI mirrors in the store can be combined with offline channels, or the seamless shopping method of online purchase and offline pickup can be strengthened to provide an immersive omni-channel shopping experience and improve brand loyalty.

Secondly, in terms of corporate social responsibility (CSR), Copel reported that 70% of consumers are more interested in understanding how the brands they support resolve social and environmental issues, and only 9% said they “always” trust what companies say about their social responsibility [17]. As a result, Nike can make full use of digital channels to support the vulnerable and disabled. For example, the brand collaborates with third-party public welfare organizations to carry out related public welfare projects on social media and other digital platforms to promote the disability-friendly product line, namely Fly Ease, to expand the brand’s influence and target new target audiences. In order to avoid the audience’s doubt, information consistency is particularly important, Nike needs to carry out a large amount of promotion support in the omni-channel at the same time, and maintain a certain degree of transparency, which is more reflected in practical measures such as calling for public welfare donations, launching limited activity clothing, to win more consumer loyalty and enhance brand’s CSR. In the same way, this approach can also be implemented in the brand’s environmental protection and sustainability strategy.

5. Conclusion

This study explores how Nike uses a variety of digital marketing methods to adapt to the highly competitive market environment and maintain the sustainable growth path of brand value. First of all, digital marketing has gradually become the core strategic blueprint of the corporate world, under pressure from competitors like Adidas, Nike has an excellent integrated digital marketing strategy, which focuses on search engine optimization marketing, content marketing (especially video-centered content creation), social media platform marketing deployment.

In the field of search engine marketing (SEM), Nike has adopted paid search advertising and search engine optimization methods to enhance its display effect and visibility in search engine rankings. Through this strategy, Nike can accurately target potential consumer groups based on brand keywords and long-tail keywords, while promoting the growth of natural traffic and click-through rate of the website. This strategy not only effectively broadens the brand coverage, but also significantly improves the return on advertising investment (ROI).

In Nike’s digital marketing framework, content marketing mainly takes video as the carrier to occupy a core position. Nike uses video to build brand narratives, reveal product innovation and transmit brand values, which use vivid visual narratives to attract audience attention and build emotional ties. In addition, Nike also uses social platforms as the medium to release fast-paced short video clips, further broadening the scope of brand radiation and attracting more potential consumers, especially in the young group to firmly establish a strong brand identity.

Therefore, social media marketing strategy (SMMS) constitutes a key element of Nike’s digital marketing strategy. SMMS uses the diversified content communication channels of social media to not only deliver brand messages, but also focuses on promoting deep participation and interaction of users through interactive characteristics and community construction. Nike actively adopts user-generated content (UGC) to promote interaction within the community, motivate users to share their brand experience, and further enhance the brand’s credibility and affinity. In addition, Nike has created a matrix account system on multiple social media platforms for different segmentations, which strengthens the connection between the brand and consumers, and also meets customer needs through accurate analysis of background data. Besides, in terms of influencer marketing, Nike effectively enhanced brand awareness and influence through cooperation with sports stars and Kols. Nike has successfully covered the brand in different areas such as sports, entertainment and even lifestyle. This strategy not only helped Nike establish a strong brand image in multiple market segments, but also promoted sales performance and brand loyalty.

In addition, the article also deeply analyzes how Nike uses cross-platform integration strategy to achieve the consistency and synergy of multi-channel marketing strategy. Nike is focused on creating an omnichannel seamless experience that ensures consistency across multiple channels. By combining data analytics and innovative technologies, Nike not only improves the consumer shopping journey, but also uses personalized promotion and inventory management to effectively push up sales conversion rates. In addition, the series of applications developed by

Nike also strengthen user engagement and loyalty to the brand, laying the foundation for building long-term customer connections. In addition, Nike in the realization of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a significant, barrier-free design concept is not only a strong enhancement of the social image of brand, but also deepen consumer loyalty to the brand.

In summary, this essay analyzes multi-dimensional strategy of Nike in the field of digital marketing, reveals how it occupies a leading position in the global market by integrating multi-channel digital marketing strategies, and analyzes the weakness and development opportunities of existing strategies according to the SWOT model, laying a clear path for future strategic planning and further solidify Nike's role as a leader in the global sportswear industry

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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