

Exploration and Deepening of the D2A Business Model under the Wave of the Metaverse - Taking the Upgrade Path of Anta's Brand Marketing Strategy as an Example

Jiaqi Huang

Business Administration
Department, Guangxi University for
Nationalities, Nanning, Guangxi,
530006, China
E-mail: 2745378026@qq.com

Abstract:

With the rapid development of technology and the in-depth advancement of digitalization, the metaverse, as a new type of Internet application and social form with a high degree of integration of virtual and reality, is gradually becoming the focus of attention from all sectors of society. The rise of the metaverse brings new opportunities for brand marketing, and the transformation of marketing strategies of sports brands under this trend is of great significance. This article takes Anta as an example, deeply analyzes its exploration and deepening process of the D2A (Direct-to-Avatar) business model in the metaverse wave, discusses the technical obstacles and user acceptance challenges in the promotion of metaverse technology, analyzes the impact of the competitive landscape on Anta's market performance, and expounds the future research directions and industry significance. It aims to analyze Anta's brand marketing strategy and its upgrade path in the metaverse context, and provide a comprehensive theoretical and practical reference for the development of sports brands in the metaverse era.

Keywords: Metaverse, D2A business model, Anta, brand marketing strategy

1. Introduction

In the process of digitalization, the metaverse has become a major hotspot in the current field of science and technology. Its characteristics of integrating virtual and reality bring opportunities and challenges to

brand marketing. Sports brands are closely related to consumers' lives, and the transformation of marketing strategies is of great significance in the metaverse context. As an industry leader, the research on Anta's marketing exploration in the metaverse is not only related to the enterprise's own market competitive-

ness but also helps to gain insights into the new trends of industry development and provide references for peers.

2. New Trends of Brand Marketing in the Context of the Metaverse

2.1 Definition and Characteristics of the Metaverse

The metaverse is a new type of Internet application and social form that highly integrates the virtual and the real. It has a large user base and highly interactive characteristics, and has features such as immersion, interactivity, openness, and co - creation. In the metaverse, the limitations of the real world are broken. Users can enter a virtual space similar to the real world through virtual reality technology and interact and communicate with other users in the virtual world, allowing consumers to experience the value and concept of the brand in the virtual world. This immersive experience provides brand - new possibilities and platforms for brand marketing.

2.2 New Opportunities for Brand Marketing in the Metaverse

2.2.1 Breaking the Limitations of Reality and Enhancing Brand Identity

The metaverse can break the limitations of the real world and provide an immersive experience environment for brand marketing, allowing consumers to experience the value and concept of the brand in the virtual world. By constructing virtual scenes, virtual characters, etc., the brand can establish closer connections with consumers, thereby enhancing brand identity.

2.2.2 Meeting Personalized Needs and Improving Brand Loyalty

The virtual scenes and personalized customization services in the metaverse can meet consumers' personalized needs. Consumers can customize their virtual images and virtual items according to their own preferences and needs in the virtual world, thereby improving brand loyalty.

2.2.3 Achieving Precision Marketing and Improving Marketing Efficiency

The social attributes and interactivity of the metaverse help the brand to establish closer connections with consumers and achieve precision social marketing for the target population. The brand can analyze consumers'

behaviors and data in the virtual world and formulate more targeted marketing strategies to improve marketing efficiency, thereby enhancing the brand's market influence and competitiveness.

2.3 New Challenges and Responses in Brand Marketing in the Metaverse

2.3.1 High Technical Threshold and the Need for Continuous Innovation

The construction and operation of the metaverse require advanced technical support, including virtual reality technology, artificial intelligence technology, blockchain technology, etc. This places higher requirements on the technical capabilities and resource investment of brand marketing. Brands need to continuously innovate and improve their technical level to meet the needs of the D2A business model and stand out in the metaverse.

2.3.2 Protection of User Privacy and the Need to Establish a Sound Regulatory System

User data in the metaverse involves personal privacy. Brands need to establish a sound regulatory system to protect users' privacy and security. At the same time, brands also need to strengthen communication and interaction with users to establish a trust relationship and improve user satisfaction and loyalty.

2.3.3 Unclear Regulatory Policies and the Need to Ensure Compliant Marketing

As a new Internet application and social form, the regulatory policies of the metaverse are currently not clear and perfect enough. Brands need to closely monitor policy dynamics and ensure that brand marketing is carried out in compliance.

2.3.4 Low User Awareness

As an emerging concept and field, the metaverse currently has relatively low user awareness and acceptance. Brands need to invest more time and energy to cultivate user awareness and acceptance, and can optimize user experience design to improve users' understanding and acceptance of the D2A business model.

2.3.5 Intensified Market Competition and the Need for Differentiated Competition

With more and more brands entering the metaverse market, market competition will become increasingly fierce. Brands need to find their own differentiated competitive advantages, formulate unique marketing strategies, high-

light Anta's brand characteristics and values, and strengthen interaction and communication with consumers to establish a trust relationship and remain invincible in the market.

3. Analysis of Anta's Brand Marketing Strategy in the Context of the Metaverse

3.1 Overview of the Anta Brand

Anta, as a leading sports brand in China, has a wide user base and brand influence. Anta has always been committed to promoting brand innovation and marketing transformation, and continuously adapts to market changes and consumer needs. Under the wave of the metaverse, Anta actively embraces new technologies and trends and explores brand marketing strategies in the context of the metaverse.

3.2 Marketing Strategy Practices of Anta in the Context of the Metaverse

3.2.1 Release of NFT Digital Collections

During the Winter Olympics, Anta launched digital ice and snow sculptures based on the movement postures of 12 Winter Olympics ice and snow events, integrating brand elements with the virtual world. These digital collections not only restored the movements corresponding to each Chinese ice and snow national team digital collection but also attracted users by calling on users to choose teams for NFT unlocking through "snow-melting special effect interaction", providing a unique collection experience and becoming a powerful tool for promotion in the virtual world, effectively enhancing the brand's popularity and reputation.

3.2.2 Creation of an Immersive Virtual Space

Anta jointly created the digital space "Anta Ice and Snow Wonderland" with Tmall Super Brand Day, including three characteristic sections: "Super Hot Space", "Anta Digital Museum", and "Wonderland Ice and Snow Heavenly Palace". With the help of virtual reality technology, it creates an immersive experience environment for consumers, allowing them to feel the Anta brand culture and value concept in the virtual space and gain an in-depth understanding of the brand history, products, and technological innovation.

3.2.3 Promotion through Virtual Characters

Anta creates virtual characters in the metaverse for brand promotion. Their images are realistic, highly interactive, and can be personalized and customized according to consumers' preferences and needs. Virtual characters can effectively shorten the distance between Anta and consumers, establish connections between them, and enhance the brand's popularity and influence.

3.2.4 Creation of a Metaverse Showroom and Virtual Fashion

Combining brand and fashion elements, Anta creates a metaverse show and virtual fashion, demonstrating its innovative design capabilities, providing more choices for consumers, attracting the attention of young groups, and shaping the brand image and value.

3.3 Implementation Effects of Anta's Metaverse Marketing Strategy

Anta's marketing strategies in the metaverse context have achieved remarkable results. Through various innovative methods such as releasing NFT digital collections, creating immersive virtual spaces, using virtual characters for brand promotion, and creating a metaverse show and virtual fashion, it has attracted the interest and attention of a large number of consumers, improved the brand's popularity and reputation, and at the same time created more sales opportunities and increased market share.

4. Exploration and Deepening of the D2A Business Model

4.1 Definition and Characteristics of the D2A Business Model

The D2A (Direct-to-Avatar) business model refers to a business model in which a brand directly sells products or services to the digital avatars (Avatars, i.e., virtual humans) of users. In the metaverse, the digital avatars of users become the key medium for interaction between the brand and consumers. The characteristics of the D2A business model include:

4.1.1 Directness

Brands can directly interact and sell with the digital avatars of users through the metaverse platform without going through intermediaries or platforms, reducing intermediate links. This enables brands to more accurately

grasp consumers' needs and preferences and formulate more effective marketing strategies to improve marketing efficiency.

4.1.2 Personalization

The D2A business model allows brands to provide personalized products and services based on the characteristics and preferences of consumers' virtual avatars, meeting consumers' personalized needs. This personalized service can enhance consumers' brand loyalty and improve the brand's market competitiveness.

4.1.3 Interactivity

Brands can interact with the digital avatars of users, collect user feedback, optimize products and services, and improve user satisfaction.

4.1.4 Immersion

In the metaverse, brands can create virtual scenes and provide immersive experiences, enabling consumers to obtain stronger sensory stimulation and emotional resonance when purchasing and using products. This immersion helps to enhance the brand value and image.

4.2 Exploration of Anta in the D2A Business Model

4.2.1 Use of Virtual Spokespersons

Anta uses virtual spokespersons for brand promotion. Their images are unique and customizable, thus more effectively conveying the brand's concept and values.

4.2.2 Collection and Analysis of User Data

Anta widely collects user data in the metaverse through the digital avatars of users, covering preferences, purchasing behaviors, interaction situations, etc. By in-depth analysis of the data, it accurately gains insights into consumers' needs and preferences, optimizes products and services, and improves user satisfaction and loyalty.

4.2.3 Expansion of Virtual Product Lines

Anta has launched a variety of virtual sports equipment and accessories in the metaverse, such as virtual running shoes, virtual sportswear, etc. They have a strong sense of reality and interactivity and can also be personalized and customized according to the characteristics and needs of users' digital avatars as well as users' preferences and needs. Through the D2A model, they are directly sold to the digital avatars of users, meeting personalized needs and enhancing the brand's popularity and influence.

4.2.4 Opening of Virtual Experience Stores

Anta has opened virtual experience stores in the metaverse, providing an immersive shopping environment. Consumers can browse and try on virtual products, understand detailed information and design concepts, and achieve seamless online and offline connection sales through the D2A model.

4.2.5 Planning and Execution of Virtual Marketing Activities

Anta has held many virtual sports events, fashion shows, and other activities in the metaverse, attracting the attention and participation of many consumers and demonstrating the brand's image and value. With the help of the D2A model, it directly sells products to the digital avatars of participants, maximizing the marketing effect.

4.3 Deepening of the D2A Business Model on Anta's Brand Marketing Strategy

4.3.1 Enhancement of Brand Experience

The D2A business model enables Anta to more directly interact with consumers' digital avatars and provide personalized products and services. This interaction method not only increases the brand's popularity and influence but also provides consumers with a more real and personalized brand experience.

4.3.2 Optimization of Marketing Strategy

Based on the collection and analysis of user data, it is possible to more accurately understand consumers' needs and preferences, formulate precise marketing strategies, improve marketing efficiency, and reduce marketing costs.

4.3.3 Strengthening of Technical R&D and Product Innovation

Continuously invest in research and development to enhance the innovation capabilities of key technologies such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence and provide technical support for the D2A model. Expand and enrich the virtual product line, including virtual clothing, virtual accessories, virtual game props, etc., to meet the diverse needs of consumers.

4.3.4 Construction of Virtual Communities and Interaction Platforms

Establish exclusive virtual communities and interaction platforms, encourage communication and sharing among consumers, and enhance the stickiness between the brand and consumers.

4.3.5 Integration of Online and Offline Resources

Integrate the D2A model with the resources of offline physical stores and e-commerce platforms to form an online and offline integrated and complementary marketing system.

4.3.6 Expansion of Market Space

The D2A model helps Anta enter the emerging metaverse market and expand market space. It enables Anta to reach more potential consumers and increase the brand's market share.

5. Enlightenment from the Upgrade Path of Anta's Brand Marketing Strategy

5.1 Keep up with the Trend of Technological Development and Continuously Innovate Marketing Strategies

Anta's marketing strategy upgrade in the context of the metaverse shows that the brand needs to keep up with the trend of technological development and continuously innovate marketing strategies. By applying new technologies and models, the brand can create more attractive and competitive marketing methods, increasing the brand's popularity and reputation.

5.2 Focus on Consumer Experience and Enhance Brand Value

In the process of upgrading the marketing strategy, Anta has always focused on improving consumer experience. By creating immersive virtual spaces, providing personalized products and services, and other ways, it has attracted the attention and love of a large number of consumers and enhanced the brand's value and consumers' brand loyalty.

5.3 Strengthen Brand Culture Construction and Convey Brand Concepts

Anta attaches great importance to brand culture construction in the marketing upgrade, such as the release of NFT digital collections and the use of the metaverse show, which successfully integrates brand elements with fashion elements, conveys the brand's innovative spirit and fashion concept, and enhances the brand's popularity and influence.

5.4 Integrate Online and Offline Resources and

Achieve Omni - channel Marketing

In the process of upgrading the marketing strategy, Anta integrates online and offline resources and realizes the linkage between the D2A business model and offline physical stores and e-commerce platforms, achieving omni-channel marketing. This omni-channel marketing strategy not only improves the brand's sales efficiency and market share but also provides consumers with a more convenient and diverse shopping experience.

5.5 Strengthen Collection and Analysis of User Data

User data is an important basis for the brand to formulate marketing strategies. Anta has understood consumers' needs and preferences by collecting and analyzing user data and has optimized products and services. Other brands should also strengthen the collection and analysis of user data and formulate more precise marketing strategies.

5.6 Expand Emerging Markets and Spaces

The metaverse, as an emerging market, has great development potential. Anta has expanded market space by entering the metaverse and has increased the brand's market share. Other brands should also actively expand emerging markets and spaces and look for new growth points.

6. Challenges Facing the Promotion of Metaverse Technology

6.1 Technical Obstacles

6.1.1 Limitations of Hardware Devices

Currently, hardware devices such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) still have many deficiencies. For example, the devices are expensive, uncomfortable to wear, have low resolution, and poor battery life. These problems limit consumers' smooth experience of the metaverse and affect the wide promotion of metaverse technology.

6.1.2 Technical Compatibility Issues

The metaverse involves the integration of multiple technologies, and the technical compatibility between different platforms, devices, and software is poor. Problems such as stuttering, screen tearing, and data transmission errors are prone to occur, reducing user experience and hindering

technology popularization.

6.1.3 Network Latency and Bandwidth Requirements

The metaverse requires high-speed and stable network support, with low latency and high bandwidth to ensure real-time interaction and smooth experience. However, the current network infrastructure is still difficult to fully meet the requirements of the metaverse. Especially in some remote areas or during network congestion periods, network problems seriously restrict the promotion of metaverse technology.

6.2 User Acceptance Challenges

6.2.1 Differences in Usage Habits

Consumers have long been accustomed to traditional Internet and real-life interaction methods, and it takes a long time for them to adapt to the new interaction mode of the metaverse. The difficulty in changing usage habits makes some users take a wait-and-see attitude towards the metaverse, affecting its wide acceptance.

6.2.2 Perception of the Realism of the Virtual World

Although the metaverse strives to create an immersive experience, compared with the real world, the realism of the virtual world still has a gap. Consumers may find it difficult to fully immerse themselves in the virtual environment and lack sufficient trust in the products and services in the virtual world, thus reducing their acceptance willingness.

6.2.3 Security and Privacy Concerns

The metaverse involves the collection and use of a large amount of user data, including sensitive information such as personal identity, behavior habits, and preferences. Users are worried about data leakage, the security of virtual property, and possible harassment in the virtual world. These security and privacy concerns have become important factors hindering users' acceptance of the metaverse.

7. Analysis of the Competitive Landscape on Anta's Market Performance

7.1 Analysis of Major Competitors

7.1.1 Competition among Domestic and Foreign Sports Brands

In the international market, brands such as Nike and Adidas have also actively explored metaverse marketing.

They compete with Anta in the metaverse field with their strong brand influence, advanced technology research and development capabilities, and global market layout. For example, Nike has made innovative attempts in virtual sports shoes, attracting a large number of consumers' attention.

In the domestic market, brands such as Li-Ning and XTEP have also laid out in the metaverse, competing for market share by releasing digital collections, creating virtual spaces, etc. The digital collections launched by Li-Ning in cooperation with the Dunhuang Museum have attracted high attention in the market, forming a competitive situation with Anta.

7.1.2 Competition from Cross-Industry Brands

In addition to sports brands, some fashion brands, technology companies, etc. have also dabbled in metaverse marketing, competing with Anta for consumers' attention and market share. For example, Gucci held a virtual fashion show in the metaverse to showcase its fashion designs, attracting many young consumers. The competition from these cross-industry brands has had a certain impact on Anta's market performance.

7.2 Anta's Competitive Advantages and Coping Strategies

7.2.1 Competitive Advantages

Brand Local Advantage: As a leading local brand, Anta has a deeper understanding of the needs of domestic consumers and market trends and can respond more quickly to market changes and launch metaverse marketing strategies that meet the preferences of local consumers.

Diversified Product Line: Anta has a rich product line, covering sports clothing, sports shoes, sports accessories, and other fields, and can provide consumers with a variety of virtual product choices in the metaverse to meet the different needs of consumers.

Omni-Channel Marketing Capability: Through the integration of online and offline resources, Anta has certain advantages in omni-channel marketing and can achieve the coordinated development of metaverse marketing and physical stores and e-commerce platforms, providing consumers with a seamless shopping experience.

7.2.2 Coping Strategies

Strengthening Brand Differentiation: Continue to highlight the brand's characteristics and values, such as integrating more Chinese cultural elements into metaverse marketing

to form differences with other brands and attract consumers.

Improving Technology Innovation Capability: Increase investment in metaverse-related technology research and development, improve the quality and experience of virtual products, and widen the technological gap with competitors.

Strengthening Cooperation and Alliances: Establish cooperative relationships with other brands, technology companies, cultural institutions, etc., jointly explore new metaverse marketing models, expand market resources, and enhance market competitiveness.

8. Future Research Directions and Their Practical Significance for Industry Development

8.1 Future Research Directions

8.1.1 Research on the Relationship between Metaverse Technology and Consumer Behavior

In-depth exploration of how metaverse technology affects consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral decision-making processes. For example, studying the factors influencing consumers' purchase decisions in the virtual environment, the formation mechanism of brand loyalty, and the impact of social interaction on consumption behavior, etc., to provide a theoretical basis for brands to formulate precise marketing strategies.

8.1.2 Research on Metaverse Marketing Ethics and Social Responsibility

With the development of metaverse marketing, ethical and social responsibility issues have become increasingly prominent. Research contents include data ethics in metaverse marketing, fair competition in the virtual environment, the impact on consumers' physical and mental health, etc., to guide brands to follow ethical norms and fulfill social responsibilities in metaverse marketing.

8.1.3 Research on Cross-Industry Metaverse Marketing Integration

Explore the marketing integration models and innovative strategies of different industries in the metaverse. For example, the cross-border cooperation between sports brands and entertainment, education, tourism and other industries, and study how to achieve resource sharing and complementary advantages through the metaverse to cre-

ate new marketing experiences and commercial values.

8.1.4 Research on Cross-Industry Metaverse Marketing Integration

Establish scientific and reasonable evaluation indicators and methods for metaverse marketing effect. In addition to traditional marketing indicators, it is also necessary to consider the unique indicators of the virtual world, such as the immersion degree of the virtual scene, the participation degree of the user's virtual avatar, and the word-of-mouth spread of the brand in the virtual community, etc., to provide quantitative basis for brands to optimize marketing strategies.

8.2 Practical Significance for Industry Development

8.2.1 Providing Scientific Guidance for Brand Marketing Strategy Formulation

Through in-depth research on the relationship between metaverse technology and consumer behavior, brands can better understand consumer needs, formulate more precise and effective marketing strategies, and improve marketing effectiveness and return on investment.

8.2.2 Promoting the Healthy and Sustainable Development of Metaverse Marketing

Research on metaverse marketing ethics and social responsibility helps to standardize industry behavior, avoid the occurrence of bad marketing phenomena, protect consumers' rights and interests, and promote the development of metaverse marketing in a healthy and sustainable track.

8.2.3 Promoting Cross-Industry Innovation and Cooperation and Resource Integration

Research on cross-industry metaverse marketing integration provides cooperation ideas and model references for different industries, promotes resource integration and collaborative innovation, expands market space, and brings new growth points for industry development.

8.2.4 Improving the Overall Marketing Level and Competitiveness of the Industry

The construction of a perfect metaverse marketing effect evaluation system can help brands timely discover problems and adjust strategies, improve the overall marketing level and competitiveness of the industry, and enable sports brands and other industries to better adapt to market changes and achieve digital transformation and upgrading in the metaverse era.

9. Conclusion and Outlook

The development of the metaverse makes the D2A business model an important trend in brand marketing. Anta has actively explored the D2A model in metaverse marketing with remarkable results, but it also faces challenges in technology, user acceptance, and market competition. The promotion of metaverse technology has technical obstacles and user acceptance challenges, and the competitive landscape has an important impact on Anta's market performance. Future related research directions are of great significance for industry development. Anta needs to continue to innovate and strengthen cooperation, and the industry also needs to work together to promote the development of the metaverse and the D2A business model and achieve digital transformation and upgrading. Looking to the future, with the progress of technology, the D2A business model will face more opportunities and challenges, and all parties should actively respond to provide better services for consumers and promote the sustainable development of the industry.

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