

Research on Film Brand Marketing Strategies: Taking the Mahua FunAge Film “Successor” as an Example

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Abstract:

Mahua FunAge plays an important role in the field of Chinese comedy. Their works are unique and highly original, which makes their box office performance very outstanding. The advertising approach of Mahua FunAge’s 2024 film “Successor” is examined in this study from two angles: the impact of the lead role and social media promotion. In terms of the influence of leading actors, the disparity between male and female perspectives will also have different effects on the choice of direction; in terms of social media promotion, film brands can adopt more diversified promotion methods, according to the analysis of research data. The study carried out a quantitative analysis of the questionnaire survey findings and concluded that social media is still one of the most effective forms of publicity and that publicity based on social background and discussion themes would yield better results. This study is committed to providing effective suggestions for the market promotion and film content marketing of Chinese comedy films, helping relevant scholars and film industry workers to learn from and refer to them, and promoting the overall progress of the industry.

Keywords: Mahua FunAge movies, Influence of leading actors, Social media promotion, Gender differences

1. Introduction

In recent years, China’s film industry has developed rapidly, the market size has also expanded, the audience’s aesthetic level has continued to improve, and film choices have also shown a trend of diversification. Consequently, taking into account the aforementioned elements, the significance of movie brands’ marketing strategies has also been emphasized. The reputation and box office performance of a film, or

even a movie brand, are significantly influenced by the efficacy of marketing efforts. Mahua FunAge is a well-known comedy brand in China, and its movies have always been adored by viewers. The brand has always had a unique comedy style and precise market positioning, and has achieved excellent results in the film industry.

This study takes Mahua FunAge’s 2024 new comedy movie “Successor” as an example to conduct an in-depth analysis of its marketing strategy and explore

the effects of social media promotion and major influencers in movie marketing. At the same time, the perspective of gender differences also provides a new research direction has emerged, especially in terms of the influence of the starring role, the gender differences show significant differences.

Through the analysis of relevant literature from 2021 to 2024, the influence of movie brands is greatly affected by content posted on social media. The influence of the film business on movie box office and reputation has also been extensively studied by academics in the field of social media marketing. Numerous studies have been conducted, and the general consensus is that social media usage done right may make a significant impact on movie brand promotion. Make good use of social media's interactive features to build a feeling of community between the brand and its followers so that people will be more inclined to support it [1]. Furthermore, the function that major actors play in promoting movie brands and building movie reputations is equally significant; nevertheless, there is still a lack of thorough research on this topic. Existing research still focuses on the promotional role of social media. Some studies include the influence of leading actors in social media marketing and confuse it with it. This study will also add the perspective of gender differences for analysis, although this aspect of research has hardly been mentioned in the existing literature. In summary, this study aims to provide more valuable reference information for the marketing plans and practices of the Chinese film industry.

RQ1: During the promotion of Mahua FunAge's movie "Successor" on social media, are there any gender differences in preferences for promotional content?

RQ2: For the audience, does the influence of the leading actor have a favorable impact on the promotion of Mahua FunAge's movie "Successor"?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Media and Film Promotion

With the rise of social media, more film companies have begun to promote their films online, allowing the public to learn about, watch, and write reviews of new films more, and helping consumers judge films through reviews on the Internet [2]. Film studios employ social media to market their films in a wider range of ways, including online live streaming, the release of trailers, official Weibo or TikTok accounts, the creation of tags pertaining to the film industry, and the promotion of movie stars in order to

garner interest and comments from fans [3]. The release of films and the development of movie brand recognition are greatly impacted by this strategy. Social media spans a broad spectrum; in addition to geographical and cultural distinctions, gender differences are being considered from a different angle. Research has indicated that there are gender-based disparities in customers' perceptions of price, fashion, and sustainable development awareness. [4-5]. However, gender differences as a new perspective for film promotion still lack research support. This study will focus on the differences in gender differences in film promotion, fill some research gaps, and open up new thinking directions for analyzing film promotion strategies.

2.2 The Role of the Leading Actor's Influence in Film Promotion

The influence of star influence on movie box office and movie brand promotion effects cannot be ignored, but the influence of star starring actors is a complex variable, and the size of the influence is difficult to predict in an objective way [6]. Existing studies have pointed out that "leading actor traffic" is a product of social media promotion and consumption in the new era, which reflects the increasing attention of movie leading actors on the Internet. The characteristics of movie leading actors have become one of the decisive factors affecting movie box office [7] Nonetheless, some researchers have examined the relationship between star influence and box office receipts using multi-classification logistic regression, and they conclude that stars have little bearing on receipts or viewership [8]. Research on this subject is still, nevertheless, comparatively uncommon, insufficiently thorough, and devoid of data support from a larger sample group. Consequently, this research will carry out a more thorough investigation into the influence that movie stars have on films and film brands, as well as a methodical examination of the impact that star traffic has on the movie promotion phase.

2.3 Summary

There is no literature that discusses social media marketing and the influence of leading actors in film brand marketing, explaining the role of social media promotion and film leading actors in increasing the popularity of film brands. In addition, the perspective of gender differences also provides new ideas for research. This article will further explore the strategies of the two for film brand marketing, and aims to provide some reference for film manufacturers, film investors and other related practitioners.

3. Research Methods

3.1 Questionnaire

This study adopts the questionnaire method in quantitative research. The questionnaires of this study were collected on the social media platform on the Internet because the Internet survey method is faster, more effective, cheaper and easier to get attention than traditional collection methods [9]. The questionnaire's results are simpler to measure, which facilitates the research's data analysis. The questionnaire is intended for those who have seen the film "Successor" and are between the ages of 20 and 45. People in this age range can make subjective decisions about the questionnaire's questions and have comparatively free discretionary spending, which is why this setting exists. For around two weeks, the questionnaire was shared on Chinese social media. A total of 184 questionnaires were gathered, 168 of which were deemed valid. Males made up 45.11% and females made up 54.89% of all the questionnaires, which is a very equitable distribution. Age-wise, those between the ages of 20 and 30 made up more than half, or 54.89%.

3.2 Limitation

Although using the Internet to publish questionnaires has certain advantages, this method still has limitations. The Internet is widely published, so it is difficult for researchers to control the participating population, resulting in imbalances in age, gender, income, etc., or it is difficult to recruit people to obtain the required answers [10].

4. Research Findings

4.1 Influence of City and Age on the Number of Cinema Visits

Table 1 shows the influence of city and age on the number of times a movie is watched. By analyzing the data, this paper found that the audience of the movie is mainly concentrated in the first-tier cities and new first-tier cities around 20-35 years old. Therefore, this paper further questioned these audience groups on the following questions: "Through which channels did you learn about the film?" "What is the most attractive factor in the film?" This paper further surveyed these audience groups on "What are the most attractive factors in the film?"

Table 1. Number of cinema visits per month

X\Y	0-1	2-3	4-5	6+	Subtotal
20-25	29(50%)	20(34.48%)	6(10.34%)	3(5.17%)	58
26-30	21(48.84%)	16(37.21%)	5(11.63%)	1(2.33%)	43
31-35	16(45.71%)	9(25.71%)	7(20%)	3(8.57%)	35
36-40	14(46.67%)	6(20%)	8(26.67%)	2(6.67%)	30
41-45	12(66.67%)	2(11.11%)	2(11.11%)	2(11.11%)	18

4.2 Channels of Access to Films and Attraction Factors

It is not difficult to conclude from the chart that males aged 21-15 living in first-tier and new first-tier cities mainly learnt about the film "Catch the Doll" produced by Happy Mahua through cinema promotion, Jieyin, Weibo, Xiaohongshu, and other channels of distribution: movie ticket sales constituted the largest portion (22.78%), followed by Weibo and Jieyin slices as a supplemental channel (21.52%), and friends' recommendations (18.99%), while Xiaohongshu and other social media accounted for a smaller portion. When it comes to women in comparable circumstances, the most common way that they find out

about a movie is through movie promotions (29.21%), which are followed by Jitterbit slices (26.97%) and recommendations from friends (21.35%). Weibo and Xiaohongshu, on the other hand, account for a smaller percentage (11.24%).

Overall, the people in 21-15 year olds living in Tier 1 and New Tier 1 cities are most likely to learn about the film Catching Dolls through cinema promotion, followed by dissemination through Shake video slicing, and lastly, introduction by friends. Below this paper analyzes the question "What is the most fascinating element of the film?" We're going to analyze it:

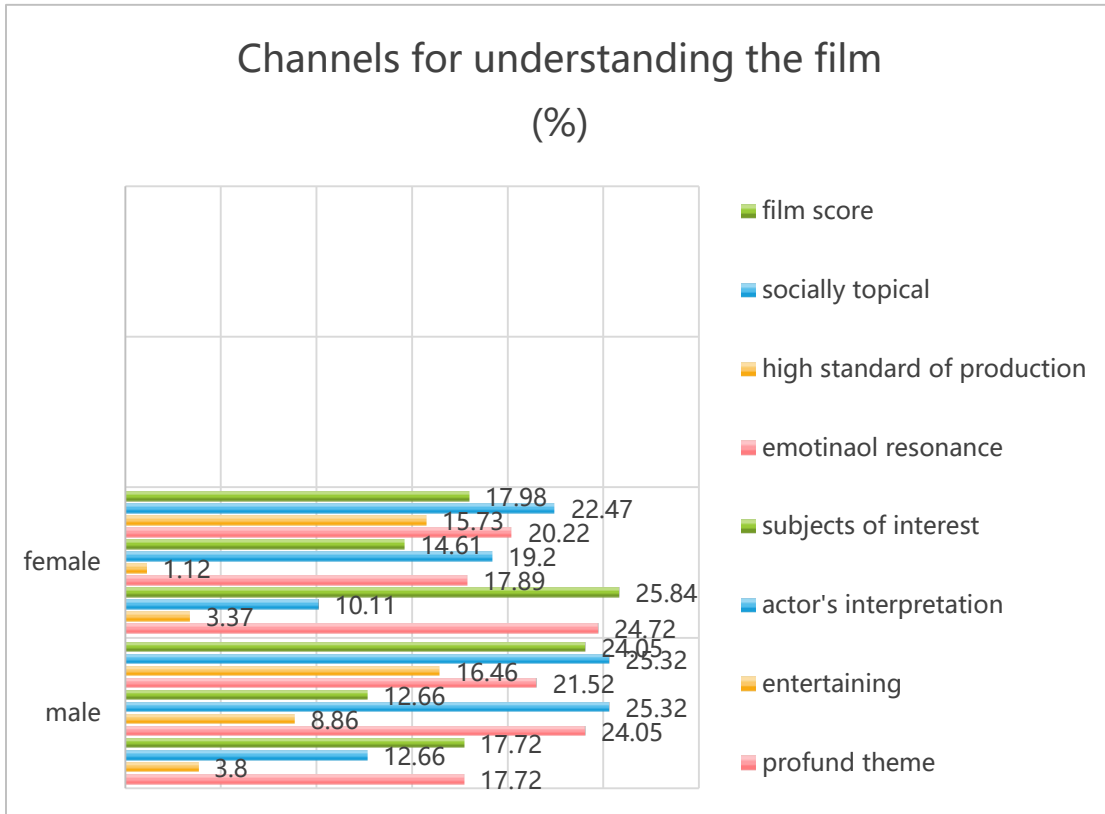


Figure 1. Number of cinema visits per month

Figure 1 illustrates that the male audience finds the most appealing aspects of the film “Catching Dolls” to be the superb acting performances of Shen Teng and Ma Li, the profound theme, the high level of production value, and the emotional resonance of the work. Meanwhile, the female audience is more interested in the film’s creation, which features the brand’s well-known intellectual property, Mahua Fun Age Successor, the humorous and engaging narrative, the high social topicality, the high level of production value, and the emotional resonance of the film. This paper concluded that the films are more popular in the world of cinema. Through the summary, we believe that the more attractive parts of the film are the profound theme of the film, high social relevance, high quality production and easy to trigger emotional resonance. Further, we believe that the film Catching Fire, for example, resonates with the audience through its high quality of production and its socially relevant, topical content.

In summary, combining the findings of the two questions, it is not difficult to conclude that the reasons for the high box office success of the film Catch-22 vary according to the perspectives of men and women:

First of all, let’s start with the film’s pre-promotion. Most men chose to go to the cinema to watch the film because of the appearance of well-known actors; while women

bought the film for the brand of Mahua Fun. Secondly, from the content of the film itself, there is a high degree of consistency between male and female perspectives. For instance, in the case of Catching Dolls, the film’s material centers on contemporary societal issues, which readily arouses the audience’s emotional resonance. When combined with the film’s high production value, this results in the movie being talked about and recommended among friends. The audience can easily combine the profound theme of the film, the exquisite production and the brand of Happy Mahua, these moves to a certain extent increase the influence of the brand of Happy Mahua, coupled with the cinema’s publicity, Jieyin short video related to the plot of the slices of the dissemination of the interest of the general public, the film’s humorous and interesting plot connected with the brand of Happy Mahua, so as to further enhance the influence of the brand of Mahua Fun, and deepen the hearts of the people.

5. Conclusion

Through the above analysis, it is found that Mahua Fun-Age mainly enhances its brand influence through the influence of the leading actors and publicity and promotion methods. On the one hand, this study discovered that gen-

der disparities affect movie choices when examining the impact of starring roles. Women watch movies because of the fan effect and spend more money on the brand itself, whereas most men watch movies primarily because of the starring actors, which is a result of the public's faith in the stars and their fame.

On the other hand, movie promotion is also an important way to promote brand awareness. Through data analysis, this study concluded that theater promotion (star roadshows, movie viewing groups) is one of the ways that audiences generally learn about the movie, followed by social media (snippets of short videos on Tik Tok, celebrity reposts on Weibo), and finally recommendations from friends.

In terms of data collection, the sample size is small and the age distribution is uneven, which will affect the generalizability of the results. In addition, since the data sources are all from the Internet, the data results may be one-sided. At the same time, the analysis of the impact of gender differences in film brand marketing is relatively preliminary and fails to fully explore its potential significance and value.

This study found that in the process of film promotion and marketing, it was affected by the influence of the leading actors and social media. The results of the questionnaire also revealed that gender differences affected the marketing strategies, which added to the gender differences' influencing factor in film brand marketing and offered fresh insights and proof for theoretic study of the field. On the other hand, the results of this study will help practitioners in the film industry to improve the effectiveness and pertinence of the promotion process and promote the development of film marketing.

Authors Contribution

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

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