

A Research on the Models of Content Marketing and Its Strategies Based on "Special Agricultural Products in Plateaus" in E-commerce Platforms

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Abstract: In the context of "The Belt and Road Initiative", e-commerce platforms have distinct advantages compared with traditional physical stores under offline shopping model, which manifests a positive development trend. Moreover, the content marketing is the carrier to connect brand concepts as well as the bridge of communication between enterprises and consumers, which will become the main form of marketing models in the future. Thereby, the model of "e-commerce + content marketing" is bound to be widely applied. This article fully combines the superior conditions of special agricultural industry in Yunnan plateaus with the new development model of "e-commerce + content marketing" to assist content marketing of special agricultural products in Yunnan Plateaus and drive the development of the real economy in the agriculture.

1 Status Analysis of the Marketing Model

Nowadays, the production and sales model of agricultural products in Kunming City, Yunnan Province mainly adopts the form of "farmers + wholesalers". It means, in short, that the agricultural products produced by farmers are sold through wholesalers or distributors and there are several intermediate links of sales, which makes the agricultural products have weak mobility and relatively high intermediate costs in China. Under this marketing model, the brand effect of agricultural products is not strong, and the mismatching of market information is prominent. The superior agricultural products in Yunnan plateaus have low competitiveness and fail to form well-known brands. Although some counties and districts have their own platforms for online sales, there are still many unresolved issues on account of incomplete systems.

2 Establishing a New Marketing Model

2.1 The Model Meaning of "E-commerce + Content Marketing"

At present, many companies have integrated the marketing model of "e-commerce + content marketing" into their own sales models. In simple terms, it is a combination of online and offline models. Online model is a new type of e-commerce platform, while offline model includes intuitive, branded, and content products. The two models are combined to create branded products that become the mainstream of the Chinese consumers. Content marketing is usually based on the production of content that is valuable, actively acceptable, absorbable and deliverable for consumers. Furthermore, it conducts new media transmission, including texts, pictures and videos and sends signals to consumers through vision, hearing, and smell to attract their attention, achieving the promotion of sales.

2.2 The Functions of the Model of "E-commerce + Content Marketing" on the Trade of Agricultural Products

The model of "e-commerce + content marketing" can have a positive impact on the production and sales of special agricultural products in plateaus. Furthermore, it enhances the production

capacity of agricultural products, brands the agricultural products, establishes unique brands, and improves the popularity, attracts more consumers to buy agricultural products, and promotes the upswing of sales, thus forming a healthy industry chain for developing agricultural products.

By means of investigating and surveying in three representative regions in Kunming City, namely, Luquan County, Xundian County, and Dongchuan District, we find that most of agricultural products are directly sold offline from the field to the market. As for the online sales, local leading companies mainly rely on Taobao and malls of WeChat official accounts to spread sales. However, there is no e-commerce platform to sell products in some production bases, which results in narrow distribution channels and low sales volume. The model of “e-commerce + content marketing” is to create an aggregated online sales platform for agricultural products. New features have also emerged in agricultural product logistics in this e-commerce environment, such as the changes in the performance of various links in the supply chain, the conversion in the role of various participants and the strengthening of customers' availability of agricultural products. Firstly, this model optimizes the logistics system of agricultural products, establishes a low-cost, high-benefit, and high-efficiency development pattern for agricultural product logistics, and implements a combination of online and offline marketing channels to expand the sales of agricultural products. Secondly, enterprises take advantages of abundant integration of the available media resources to apply contents to consumers and build brands with the characteristics of agricultural products. Thirdly, this model targets at the mainstream consumers of enterprises, adopts big data to understand consumers' needs profoundly, establishes direct and indirect contacts with target consumers through different media, and introduces excellent and impeccable content marketing to transmit the concept of enterprises.

3 An Analysis of Content Marketing Strategies for "Special Agricultural Products" in Plateaus

3.1 The Strengthening of Brand Strategies

3.1.1 The Establishment of the Awareness of Brand Cultivation

At the present stage, most farmers in China are still relatively conservative in thinking, reluctant to bring forth new ideas, unfamiliar with sales in the new situation, and insufficient in marketing knowledge and brand awareness. Furthermore, they still adopt traditional sales methods in sales. The main reason is that they have comparably low cultural quality and they are not good at marketing. There is a misunderstanding among enterprise operators about whether to create a brand and how to create a brand. Some enterprises do believe that there is no need to create a brand if products have high quality. However, many enterprises have established their own brands, but failed to manage those brands and paid no attention to the maintenance of the brands. All these factors have impacted on the development of brand marketing for agricultural products. The establishment, expansion and inheritance of a brand is extremely conducive to the sales development of agricultural products. Therefore, content marketing of agricultural products enables potential consumers to establish brand awareness, conveys information through direct and vivid videos or pictures, and more effectively displays the products or services provided by the brand, thus making the brand enjoy popular support.

3.1.2 The Construction of a Corresponding Special Brand Culture in Terms of Product Contents

When enterprises communicate their brand concepts through contents, they are required to combine their brand concepts with contents to convey information to consumers in a more comfortable way. The combination of target location and marketing contents makes it possible to preferentially display high-quality products, enable consumers to understand product properties, meet the needs of mainstream consumers, and achieve the purpose of in-depth marketing.

Taking Kunming Lanlumeng Technology Co., Ltd. in Luquan County as an example, we find that this company has an interesting grape brand called "Hongchun (Red Lips in English)". The

local person in charge explains that "the grapes gradually change from green to red in color during the ripening process, and the shapes of the grapes are plump which likes red lips. " In this way, it corresponds the shape and taste of the product to the brand, which enables the unique brand name to attract consumers' curiosity and to convey the distinctive characteristics of the product.

3.1.3 The Improvement of Products' Brand Awareness and Conversion Rate

After establishing cultivation consciousness of brands and building distinctive brands, companies can promote brands from three aspects to increase brand awareness and conversion rate.

(1) Forming an Interactive Community for Transactions. Companies can utilize short videos to combine with content marketing of products, which can allow consumers to participate in interactions and to comment on the content of short videos. What's more, potential customers can view information to eliminate their own doubts, and consumers become channels for new media marketing.

(2) Excavating the Content Culture of Agricultural Products to Promote Sustainable Development for Brands. As for a brand of agricultural products, it is first necessary to determine its product positioning, carry out culture-shaping, and strengthen content marketing in accordance with the desired effect. Companies should conduct surveys on customer groups and fit in with customer requirements, thereby increasing brand awareness, accelerating brand promotion, and expanding user groups of the brand. Furthermore, they should communicate with customers in combination with mass emotions to further elevate customers' dependence on brands and facilitate sustainable development of brands.

(3) Accelerating the Formation of "Fans" Groups. If innovative contents of these short videos generate new media materials, it will contribute to the formation of "fans" groups through the communication and discussion of consumer groups. Especially, companies can effectively increase market attractiveness of new media for young people. Therefore, enterprises should combine experience marketing with content marketing, and display marketing contents through videos, which not only intensifies the enjoyment of experience marketing, but also gives full play to the advantages of online marketing and improves marketing effect.

3.2 The Broadening of Marketing Channels

3.2.1 The Enhancement of Product Content Output by Using Network Media

Having short, frequent and fast features, Short videos are newly developing products in the era of the mobile Internet. They contain rich information and possess with strong social attributes, which are liable to spread. At present, people pay increasingly attention to content marketing methods for value delivery and value sharing through We-Media. Consumers' expectations for advertising contents are no longer confined to products, but more concerned about the stories behind brands and the cultural connotation. Content marketing can make customers understand brands' characteristics through the dissemination of new media and launch different contents for different consumer groups to attract their attention. Enterprises should innovate marketing methods, achieve diversified marketing, forge content marketing in depth and breadth, boost brand awareness and popularity, produce products in customer preference, and generate customers' loyalty to brands.

3.2.2 The Exploitation of Distribution Channels for Cross-border E-commerce under The Belt and Road Initiative

In 2013, Xi Jinping, General Secretary, put forward the concept of The Belt and Road Initiative. The Belt and Road Initiative not only allows many enterprises to come to China, but also lets more Chinese companies go outside, which determines a way for China's opening up and economic development in the new period, and provides a new direction for industrial development of cross-border e-commerce. As an online silk road, the industry of cross-border e-commerce is booming and becomes a new engine driving China's economic development. According to the data, the transaction scale of China' cross-border e-commerce is expected to reach RMB12.7 trillion in 2020 under the context of The Belt and Road Initiative. With the advent of the 5G era, China has

achieved the most significant end of the world in the field of cross-border e-commerce. Furthermore, China is capable of serving as a global online trade zone. The competition between traditional platforms of cross-border e-commerce is becoming increasingly fierce. If enterprises intend to occupy a major position in the cross-border e-commerce and acquire the right of speech, they will be required to create more valuable platforms so as to promote agricultural products and Chinese brands to go out of the domestic market for overseas clients.

3.3 The Reinforcement of Product Recognition

3.3.1 Comprehending Customer Demands and Pinpointing Customer Orientation

In order to conduct product positioning precisely, the most important thing is to understand the demands of mainstream consumers. Companies can pinpoint the accurate positioning, determine appropriate content marketing methods to facilitate product brand marketing, conduct innovative design, and forge brand images of products and companies through big data analysis in accordance with product characteristics. Agricultural products feature in relatively far space between production and sales, large volume, distinct seasonal variation, and poor transportation efficiency. Enterprises should focus on product promotion and brand creation in the process of online sales of products with low unit value since those products are not suitable to directly bargain with retailers. However, as for agricultural products with higher unit value, marketers can adopt high-quality and high-priced strategies to win the favor of high-end customer groups. Furthermore, enterprises can priorly occupy the market share of the network marketing by virtue of building brand images, strengthening the packaging experience, and extending the value chain of agricultural products.

3.3.2 Putting People First and Laying Emphasis on Consumer Experience

The socialized media is a kind of media model that regards communication as the key element, centers on personal transmission, and concerns about sharing, openness and participation. What makes the efficiency of transmission improved is the communication and interaction between high-quality content and the precise goal in this direction of media socialization. Content marketing has the characteristics of boosting growth with the purpose of improving consumers' recognition for product brands and erecting correct understandings about corporate brands when communicating with target groups. Enterprises can depend on big data analysis to select more favorable display channels and accelerate in-depth communication between enterprises and customers.

The E-commerce Operation Center in Xundian County, Kunming City is implementing a new system of "One Product One Code" which is an intermediate channel for the communication between consumers and farmers. Consumers can get wise to agricultural products directly by scanning the code through the system, and know all links from planting, production to sales, so that the products are more known to consumers. The system of "One Product One Code" provides high quality service to consumers and enables them to enjoy the process of shopping. At the same time, consumers' search histories are recorded by big data and directly fed back to enterprises. Therefore, there is a positive interaction between the enterprise and consumers, which is more conducive to the sustainable development of content marketing model.

3.4 The Optimization of Resource Allocation

3.4.1 The Intensification of Talent Team Construction

Modern agricultural e-commerce is a systematic construction project, which should cultivate senior talents who understand both the theoretical knowledge of agricultural and sideline products as well as business affairs, Internet technology and regulations. Therefore, colleges and universities should connect with enterprises, teach students according to their aptitudes, cultivate professional talents, strengthen the training on theoretical knowledge and the guidance on practical operation for students, apply theoretical knowledge to practices of scientific researches, and foster inter-disciplinary talents who truly conform to special agricultural products in the mode of "e-commerce + content marketing". Enterprises should carry out the knowledge training on informatization, digitization and networking for farmers in the production areas of special

agricultural and sideline products, launch universal education of scientific knowledge on e-commerce, offer assistance to farmers to fully comprehend relevant knowledge about e-commerce and content marketing of special agricultural products, and cultivate professional talents.

3.4.2 The Construction of a Professional Production Team for Content Marketing

A professional team of content production is required in the process of constructing and operating online platforms for agricultural products and collecting and publishing publicity information for online platforms. Enterprises should propose “the content as king” in the publicity. Only by producing superior content can enterprises attract more netizens to pay attention to the high-class agricultural products of enterprises and increase popularity and trading volume of products. Platforms’ publicity and education, products’ advertisement design, planning of network marketing campaign and other aspects should be finished by a professional team of content production. Furthermore, enterprises should actively organize the training and education for online sales, teach the basic operation and marketing methods of the Internet, instruct the experience of interaction with consumers, and emphatically forge the production of product content.

3.4.3 The Exertion of the Supporting Role of Professional Resources

When enterprises build a professional team of content production for network marketing, it is also necessary to reasonably configure corresponding facilities, provide a stable and comfortable environment on software and hardware for the professional team of content production for network marketing, and ensure the achievements of propaganda and promotion. Enterprises can set up an effective budget for special hardware facilities in order to purchase professional corollary equipment, such as equipment for network broadcast, equipment for photography and video recording, etc., which can give full play to the supporting role of professional resources in content marketing.

3.5 The Advancement of Product Quality

3.5.1 The Emphasis on the Safety of Agricultural Products and Construction of a Quality Monitoring System

In the development of e-commerce for special agricultural products, enterprises should lay emphasis on handling and increasing capital investment in the standard and processed construction of agricultural products. A series of codes and standards should also be formulated for the cultivation, production, and product packaging of agricultural products in enterprises. For example, pesticide residues should be evaluated, and agricultural products should be classified according to their quality to guarantee the quality of products. Furthermore, enterprises should attach importance to the construction of brand images, the monitoring of product quality, and packaging grading of agricultural products, so that they can make their products distinctive and identifiable, protect the legitimate rights and interests of consumers, and improve the interests of producers for agricultural product.

Star Farm Agricultural Technology Co., Ltd. builds a traceability system, which can realize the true record of information in the entire process from the initial link of the growth of agricultural products to processing, storage, transportation and sales according to consumer demands. Customers only need to scan the bar code of the product on the terminal to inquire the information content, such as the type, place of origin, and production status of the product. Food safety can be guaranteed, and people can be assured of cost-effective and pollution-free products with the help of the control system.

3.5.2 The Intensification of Cultivating Seeds of Agricultural Products and the Improvement of Products’ Taste

Enterprises should strive to boost the added value of products, lengthen industrial chain of products, and ultimately upgrade the agricultural comprehensive benefits. As a result, enterprises must lay emphasis on scientific and technological innovation, ameliorate product features,

continuously lift the added value of products, make efforts to achieve breakthroughs and leaps in the quality of agricultural products, let high quality products win the trusts of mainstream consumers, expand the market for special agricultural products, and elevate the overall economic benefits of plateau-specific agriculture. What's more, enterprises should try hard to build Kunming City of Yunnan Province as an important export-oriented industrial base with plateau features and an export trade base for special agricultural products with brand advantages in the southwest region.

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