

Research on Marketing Strategies for Experiential Products in Streaming Media Format

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Abstract. In the digital age, experiential consumption has become the core driver of domestic demand. Experiential products such as movies have shifted from traditional cinemas to streaming platforms. This article mainly employs the case analysis method, using the movie *Loss in Russia* as an example, integrating the two contents of streaming media and experiential consumption. It explores the marketing strategies of experiential consumption products in the streaming media format. Based on the 4P theory, this article discusses from four aspects: product, location, price, and promotion. With the core content of emotional resonance combined with the free model of streaming platforms and diversified promotional channels, it attracts a large amount of traffic and realizes the business model of traffic monetization.

Keywords: Streaming media; Experiential consumption; Marketing Strategy.

1. Introduction

In today's era when the digital wave is sweeping across the globe, experiential consumption is becoming the core driving force for stimulating domestic demand. Experiential consumption refers to a consumption form centered around consumers' sense of participation, emotional resonance, and scene interaction - it no longer merely focuses on the functional satisfaction of goods, but creates additional value through "process experience". Movies, as a typical experiential consumption product, are undergoing a transformation from the traditional single cinema model driven by the Internet to a rich and diverse streaming media format. The application of streaming media technology fundamentally promotes the renewal and development of communication media, improves the communication methods of modern machinery equipment, and accelerates the speed of information replication and dissemination.[1]

Streaming media platforms have become essential distribution channels for experiential products. Current academic research primarily focuses on two main aspects. One is theoretical and practical research on experiential consumption products, and the other is a comprehensive exploration of streaming media, including its definition, characteristics, applications, and technological advancements.

The core essence of experiential consumption lies not in fulfilling functional needs but in satisfying sensory enjoyment and emotional arousal. Scholars have identified three key dimensions to explore decision-making for experiential consumption products: emotions, technology, advertising. Consumer satisfaction is often resulted from consumption experience that meets or not meets their prior expectation or consumption goal and augmented reality technology can enhance consumers' attitudes towards products. At the same time, the self-presentational style of advertisements can influence consumers' self-images, and subsequently affect their purchasing intentions.[2]

Streaming media is both a tactic for the audience and a strategy for the industry [3]. The audience temporarily challenge the traditional copyright system and the control of media giants through streaming media, while the industry incorporates this practice back into its business model. Additionally, streaming media is not only a technological innovation, but also a cultural practice that has restructured audience behavior, industrial logic and geographical constraints.[3] Compared with the content quality, streaming media places greater emphasis on the features of convenience and

social interaction. The transformation of contemporary media consumption patterns refers to the fact that viewers are gradually moving away from traditional linear television broadcasting and instead favor on-demand streaming platforms such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime.[4] This transition reflects broader technological, behavioral, and industrial transformations in the digital era. In terms of business models, some scholars have also conducted comparative studies on different streaming media platforms. Taking the comparative study of Netflix and Tencent Video as an example, it demonstrates the different business streaming service models in the digital ecosystem under different commercial and cultural logics, the ways they respond to challenges, and the future trends.[5] Netflix and Tencent Video represent diverse streaming media business models. One is a streaming service that mainly relies on video production and distribution, while the other is an independent video entertainment sharing platform owned by the parent company Tencent.

Existing literature mainly focuses on the separate discussions of experiential consumption products and streaming media. This study aims to integrate these two aspects and explore the marketing strategies for experiential consumption products in the context of streaming media. Based on the 4P Marketing theory, this paper mainly adopts the methods of case analysis and comparative analysis. Focusing on *Lost in Russia* as an example of experiential consumption products, the study examines four dimensions: product, promotion, price, and place. The paper provides theoretical references for the marketing of experiential products in the streaming media era.

2. Overview of case

The traditional cinema chain is the typical distribution and screening model of the film industry, featuring a chain-like distribution and screening mechanism consisting of a single film distribution entity and several cinemas. Cinemas need to join the film distribution network to obtain the right to screen the films. The film producers, in turn, share the box office revenue with the cinemas through the distribution network. In the past, most mainland films such as *The Wandering Earth* and *Ne Zha: The Demon Child's Birth* relied on the traditional cinema distribution model.

However, with the continuous development of technology, the technological carriers have driven the transformation of film carriers. Streaming media film platforms have emerged as a result.[6] Streaming media movies refer to those released through streaming media platforms as the main distribution channels, and they are made available for online on-demand viewing through the use of internet technology. Its essence is the result of the deep integration of the film industry with the Internet. It has broken the traditional "cinema-exclusive" distribution boundary of films, enabling them to reach a wider audience through multiple terminals such as smart TVs, mobile phones, tablets, and computers.

To investigate the effects of streaming media, this paper takes the movie "*Lost in Russia*" as an example. As a comedy film, it is the third film in the "*Annoying series*" directed and starred by Xu Zheng. The film tells the story of a mother and her son experiencing conflicts and disputes during their journey, but eventually coming to understand each other and reach reconciliation. It explores some issues in Chinese family relationships. This film was one of the seven major films in the 2020 Spring Festival box office season, and originally scheduled to be released on January 25, 2020 in Chinese mainland cinemas. However, due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, most public places were closed, including shopping malls and cinemas. And then, most films announced their withdrawal from the Spring Festival. Interestingly, *Lost in Russia* was directly released on online platforms, becoming the first film in Chinese film history to be released online during the Spring Festival period. On January 24th, 2020, the producer of *Lost in Russia*, Huanxi Media, decided to sell the copyright to ByteDance for 630 million yuan. According to the statistics, within the only 3 days, the online platform of *Lost in Russia* has accumulated a total of 600 million views, 180 million viewers.

The paper also mentioned another case, *Legend of Deification*, for comparative analysis. It was shown using the traditional cinema chain model. *Legend* is a fantasy animated film, released in Chinese mainland on October 1, 2020, the film is set in the world after the Fengshen War, telling the story of

Jiang Ziya being demoted to the mortal world because of questioning the "way of heaven" and embarking on a journey of exploration of truth and self-redemption.

3. Analyzing Loss in Russia using the 4Ps theory

3.1. Product strategy

Loss in Russia is an emotional comedy film that continues the road comedy style of The Annoying Series, yet shifts its narrative focus from an adventure story to a discussion about family and familial affection. The film primarily depicts the character Xu Wanyi and his mother spending six days and nights on a train. Given its hybrid characteristics, this paper analyzes the product strategy from two perspectives.

3.1.1. Analysis at the emotional level

As a family-oriented emotional comedy, Loss in Russia is well-suited for collective family viewing. Streaming media offers greater convenience than going to the cinema, where people have to deal with high ticket prices and travel. This flexibility is particularly beneficial for older adults, who frequently face barriers to cinema attendance such as high ticket prices, physical mobility constraints, or lack of companions. Consequently, streaming emerges as an optimal distribution channel for promoting intergenerational engagement with this family-oriented content.

3.1.2. Analysis at the comedic layer

Loss in Russia, comedy-style movies, is well-aligned with the emotional imperatives of the Spring Festival, a culturally significant holiday centered on family reunion and cheerful leisure. Through its use of humorous narrative techniques and a finely crafted storyline, the film constructs a relaxed and cohesive emotional environment. This approach effectively addresses the entertainment demands of younger demographics while simultaneously enabling older family members to connect with the vibrant festive ethos. Moreover, Loss in Russia was released during a special period of the epidemic. It not only delivered joy and solace to viewers but also served as a counterbalance to pandemic-related anxiety, infusing a sense of vitality into an otherwise dull and monotonous life under lockdown.

3.2. Price strategy

Loss in Russia was released for free on the first day of the Lunar New Year, instantly drawing significant attention across the film industry and setting a precedent for shifting theatrical releases to streaming platforms. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, this move was widely perceived as a cost-saving strategy for distributors and studios. However, from a revenue perspective, it introduced a novel approach to film distribution and broadcasting—one that prioritized accessibility and audience engagement over traditional box office reliance.

Due to the free streaming model, the movies have attracted a large number of users. The growth of users is the source of revenue for streaming media platforms.[7] The high level of user attention generated by Loss in Russia can be monetized through advertisements and subscriptions. ByteDance's acquisition of the film's copyright for 6.3 billion yuan reflects its bet on converting this attention into long-term revenue. Just three days after its free release across all platforms, Loss in Russia achieved a total viewing volume of 600 million times, with over 180 million unique viewers. This figure far exceeded the audience size of the same film if it had been released in theaters during the same period. Take the film Legend of Deification released in the same year as an example. Legend of Deification is also a film that was originally scheduled to be released during the Spring Festival of 2020. However, due to the pandemic, its release was postponed to the National Day period. Legend of Deification film achieved a cumulative box office of 883 million yuan across the country after three days of release. However, during the eight-day National Day holiday, the total number of viewers for all films combined was only 99.594 million.[8].

3.3. Place Strategy

Compared to traditional theatrical releases, streaming distribution offers viewers significantly greater flexibility in choosing when and where to watch, dismantling the constraints of fixed showtimes and physical theater locations. For Huanxi Media, the production company behind *Loss in Russia*, the 630 million yuan in copyright revenue not only covers production and promotion costs but also achieves profitability. For Byte Dance, this deal represents a highly cost-effective strategy, enabling the company to expand its content library and engage users without the substantial overhead of theatrical distribution. Just based on the massive number of views, Byte Dance can easily generate over 1 billion yuan in profits through the monetization method of attracting traffic by playing the movie *Loss in Russia*.^[9]

Moreover, the streaming media format significantly enhances opportunities for film critics and enthusiasts to analyze film details and share secondary edited content. Unlike theatrical viewings, where fixed schedules and the inability to pause or rewind limit attention to nuanced details, streaming allows viewers to repeatedly watch specific segments for in-depth analysis. Additionally, the high quality video accessible via screen recording enables professional level secondary editing, overcoming the poor quality issue of theater captured footage. Furthermore, audience feedback on viewing experiences contributes to building the reputation of both the films and the streaming platforms.

For ordinary viewers, this streaming media format significantly enhances the flexibility of viewing, as it enables viewers to choose their viewing methods according to their own preferences. Compared to the constraints on participation in traditional cinema scenarios caused by fixed screening schedules and space limitations, streaming media enables users to delve deeper into the details of the film and fully meet the personalized exploration needs by pausing, rewinding or replaying.

3.4. Promotion strategy

Loss in Russia fully leveraged the advantages of streaming media and ByteDance's platform, combined with the star effect, to amplify promotional and publicity outcomes.

First, publicize through the online social interactions. During the marketing and release of *Loss in Russia*, the film deployed a series of interactive online games on Douyin, a platform under ByteDance.

Meanwhile, director Xu Zheng interacted with the audience through live streaming and short videos, collaborating with well-known internet celebrities on short video production and jointly promoted the film through this platform. He shared the filming footage and the profound meaning of the film. These social interactions significantly enhanced the film's popularity, the audience's participation, and the depth of their memory of the film.

Second, *Loss in Russia* maximized the star power of its cast to amplify promotional impact. The main actors of the film include well-known and talented domestic actors such as Xu Zheng, Huang Meiyang, Yuan Quan, Jia Bing, and Guo Jingfei, as well as popular actors like Song Xiaobao and Huang Jingyu who made cameo appearances in the film. These actors not only enjoy widespread popularity and a good reputation, but also have a large number of fans and a strong following base.

4. Suggestion

First, films scheduling on streaming platforms can give priority to genres such as comedies and family dramas, which are suitable for home viewing. This fully demonstrates the convenience of streaming media. And these kinds of movies can take advantage of the benefits of streaming media sharing to enable friends and family to relax and interact with each other while watching together.

Second, choose to broadcast the movie on well-known online platforms. This not only enables reaching a wider audience, but also benefits from the platform's brand influence, technical capabilities and diversified promotional methods, significantly enhancing the movie's exposure, user attention

and market competitiveness. Well-known platforms usually have a large user base and long-term accumulated market reputation, such as iQIYI, Netflix, Douyin under Byte Dance, which provide a good guarantee for users' viewing experience. In addition, well-known platforms usually have professional marketing teams and abundant promotional resources, which can provide diverse promotion strategies for the movie, such as original short videos and recommendation lists.

Third, break away from the traditional model of relying solely on box office revenues for traditional cinemas, and explore diversified profit paths through streaming media. In the traditional film industry, the box office revenue of cinemas has long held a dominant position. This business model is not only constrained by screening rates, geographical coverage, and fluctuations in attendance, but also faces the challenge of high operating costs. The streaming media platforms have brought innovative business models to the film industry, opening up diversified revenue channels such as subscription models and ad placements. The combined model of traditional theatrical release and streaming playback might be the best option.

5. Conclusion

Based on the 4P marketing theory framework, combined with the case of the movie *Lost in Russia*, the article reveals the innovative marketing strategies for experiential consumption products in the streaming media era. As the first Chinese film to abandon traditional cinemas and instead go straight to streaming platforms during the Spring Festival season, its marketing practices have verified this viewpoint.

First, streaming media has provided a more convenient and effective platform for home entertainment and family-related products, expanding the audience for watching movies and enhancing the user experience. Second, streaming media adopts a free pricing strategy, generating revenue through membership subscriptions, advertisement placements and the sale of derivative products based on traffic. Third, streaming media provides multi-platform and multi-channel distribution for experiential products, and offers a favorable platform for online interaction and secondary creation, increasing user engagement. Last, streaming media provides more diverse promotion channels for experiential products. By combining online and offline methods, it maximizes the advantages and promotional effects of streaming media platforms.

This research integrates the aspects of streaming media and experiential consumption, opening up new paths and methods for the marketing of experiential consumption products. Additionally, it provided new platforms and suggestions for content producers, and promoted the innovation and advancement of streaming media technology.

While this research provides valuable insights into the marketing strategies of experiential products in streaming media, this article also has certain limitations. The study primarily focuses on a single case and its universality is not strong. Moreover, this article only employs the case analysis method. incorporating quantitative research would make the conclusions of the article more reliable.

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