

The Overseas Social Media Platform and the Improvement of China's International Communication Ability—Taking TikTok as an Example

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Abstract: *Using TikTok as a focal point, this paper delves into the evolution of international social media platforms and their impact on China's global communication prowess. It begins by delineating the definition and taxonomy of overseas social media platforms, charting their developmental trajectory. The paper examines the context and significance of China's international communication, along with strategies aimed at enhancing its efficacy. It then delves into an in-depth exploration of TikTok, elucidating its evolution, defining characteristics, and its pivotal role in shaping international communication. Furthermore, the discussion encompasses the challenges faced by TikTok, accompanied by proposed strategies, such as bolstering engagement with global users and fortifying content review and data security protocols. Through this exploration of TikTok's case, a comprehensive understanding emerges of how overseas social media platforms influence China's global communication prowess.*

Keywords: *Overseas social media platform; China; International communication ability; TikTok; Promotion strategy*

1. Introduction

In the era of globalization and advanced internet technology, overseas social media platforms have become pivotal in facilitating international communication. TikTok, a globally acclaimed short-video social application, has garnered widespread attention for its prowess in international communication. The app's triumph doesn't solely stem from its distinctive user experience and innovative features but, more significantly, from its adept international communication strategy. Through TikTok, a diverse global audience gains insight into China's traditional culture, culinary delights, music, and more, fostering deeper cross-cultural understanding and dialogue among nations. This amplification of international communication not only augments China's soft power but also unlocks novel prospects for Chinese enterprises to thrive in the international marketplace. Consequently, this paper delves into TikTok as a case study to investigate overseas social media platforms' role in enhancing China's international communication abilities[1]. Its objective is to explore the trajectory and challenges in China's international communication landscape, with the aim of bolstering the nation's prowess in global communication and fortifying the development of overseas social media platforms.

2. The Development of Overseas Social Media Platforms and the Improvement of China's International Communication Ability

2.1 The rise and development trend of overseas social media platforms

Definition and classification of social media platform: Social media platform refers to an online platform that provides users with communication, sharing and interaction through the Internet and mobile communication technology. According to different functions and characteristics, social media platforms can be divided into the following categories: social network platforms (such as Facebook and Twitter), Weibo platforms (such as Weibo and Twitter), short video platforms (such as TikTok and YouTube), and photo sharing platforms (such as Instagram and Pinterest).

2.1.1 The development of overseas social media platforms

The evolution of overseas social media platforms finds its roots in the widespread adoption of the

Internet and the advancements in mobile communication technology. Initially, the surge in Internet use saw people leveraging tools like e-mail and instant messaging for online interactions. As mobile communication technology progressed and smartphones became ubiquitous, social media platforms offered a means for constant communication and sharing, accessible anytime, anywhere.

At the onset, social networking platforms like Facebook and Twitter dominated the landscape, establishing user identities and social connections through account registrations[2]. These platforms facilitated communication and content sharing among users. With the ascent of the mobile Internet, these platforms swiftly transitioned to mobile applications, empowering users with on-the-go access to social media services.

In more recent times, the landscape has diversified, witnessing the emergence of short video and photo sharing platforms. TikTok and YouTube, among others, have captivated audiences with their short video uploading and sharing capabilities. Simultaneously, platforms like Instagram and Pinterest have carved a niche for users to share and showcase their lives and interests through photo uploads. These platforms have become integral hubs for users' personal expression and social engagement.

2.1.2 The development trend of overseas social media platforms

1) Mobile evolution: The widespread adoption of smartphones has inclined users toward accessing social media via mobile devices.

2) Multimedia expansion: There's a growing user appetite for diverse content formats, such as graphics, audio, and video.

3) Personalized experiences: Social platforms now offer tailored recommendations and customized services, catering to individual user preferences.

4) Emergence of social e-commerce: Integrating e-commerce functions, these platforms facilitate seamless shopping and trading experiences for users.

2.2 The promotion of china's international communication ability

2.2.1 The background and significance of China's international communication

As the second largest economy and the most populous country in the world, China has important international influence. It is of great strategic significance for China to strengthen its international communication ability. Through international communication, China can better display its culture, values and development achievements, enhance the international community's understanding and recognition of China, and enhance China's international image and reputation. The background of China's international communication is that China has made great development achievements in the fields of economy, science and technology and culture, and has become an important economic and cultural power in the world. China's international influence is increasing, but compared with its economic strength and cultural background, China's international communication ability needs to be improved. Strengthening the ability of international communication can help China better show its development achievements and values to the world, enhance the international community's understanding and recognition of China, and enhance China's international image and reputation [3].

2.2.2 The ways and strategies to improve China's international communication ability

China has the potential to amplify its voice and perspectives globally by establishing international media platforms like China Radio International and China Television International. Expanding investment in foreign language education will bolster the language proficiency of its populace, enabling greater participation in global communication. Actively engaging and leveraging overseas social media platforms will be instrumental in broadening China's international influence, allowing for content dissemination and interactive engagement with a global user base. Furthermore, fostering robust cultural exchanges and showcasing China's cultural allure through diverse cultural activities and art exhibitions will further bolster the nation's global presence.

3. The role and influence of TikTok in international communication

3.1 The history and characteristics of TikTok

3.1.1 The origin and development of TikTok

TikTok is a short video social application developed by China company ByteDance. It was first launched in China in 2016 and named TikTok. With its success in China market, ByteDance launched the international version of TikTok in 2017, and officially launched it to the global market in 2018. TikTok has developed rapidly, and by 2021, it has become one of the most popular social media applications in the world, with billions of users.

3.1.2 The features and advantages of TikTok

TikTok primarily centers around short videos spanning 15 to 60 seconds, catering perfectly to the modern social media user's craving for fast, succinct content. This concise format allows for swift content consumption and creation, significantly boosting user engagement and retention. Emphasizing creativity and entertainment, TikTok offers a plethora of creative tools like filters, music, and special effects, empowering users to craft captivating, innovative videos effortlessly. This unique blend of creativity and entertainment has magnetized a vast cohort of young users, providing them with a stage to showcase their talents and individualities. TikTok's robust algorithmic recommendation system tailors content to users' preferences and behaviors, making content discovery seamless while extending user engagement. Operating on a global scale, TikTok draws in users and creators from diverse corners of the world, fostering cross-cultural communication and sharing. Through TikTok, users delve into and experience various global cultures and lifestyles. Its impact on international communication is profound, with TikTok videos often swiftly spreading across social media, igniting global conversations and garnering widespread attention. Additionally, TikTok serves as a platform for discussions on social issues and political events, enabling users to voice their opinions, thereby influencing societal discourse.

3.2 The role of TikTok in international communication

3.2.1 The popularity and influence of TikTok in overseas markets

As a global short video application, TikTok has achieved great success and popularity in overseas markets. It attracts a large number of users with its unique content form and innovative algorithm recommendation system. According to statistics, by 2021, TikTok has more than 2 billion downloads worldwide, making it one of the most popular social media applications in the world. The popularity of TikTok in overseas markets is not only the increase in the number of users, but more importantly, its influence on local culture and social habits. Through TikTok, users can easily create and share short video content, which is more in line with modern people's fast-paced life and fragmented reading habits. TikTok's short video content is also more vivid and interesting, attracting a large number of users to participate and interact. This novel mode of communication and content form has a far-reaching impact on the media industry and cultural industry in overseas markets [4].

3.2.2 TikTok's promotion of China's international communication ability

TikTok's remarkable success has significantly bolstered and amplified China's prowess in international communication. As a product originating from a Chinese company, TikTok's triumph in global markets underscores the technological innovation and exceptional product design prowess within Chinese enterprises. This triumph not only elevates the international standing of Chinese businesses but also serves as an exemplary model for enhancing China's international communication capabilities. Simultaneously, TikTok's international operations yield invaluable insights and lessons for Chinese enterprises aiming to venture into foreign markets. By navigating overseas landscapes, TikTok not only acquires an understanding of local user preferences and behaviors but also amasses a wealth of data and market insights from global users. These experiences and data hold substantial significance as a point of reference for Chinese enterprises seeking to expand their presence in the international market and strategically position their products.

4. The Challenges and Coping Strategies of TikTok in International Communication

4.1 TikTok's international communication challenges

4.1.1 The question and criticism of international public opinion on TikTok

On one hand, there's a prevalent concern that TikTok hosts content riddled with vulgarity, violence, and explicit material, potentially influencing teenagers negatively. Conversely, there are grave accusations against TikTok regarding privacy breaches and data security issues, raising apprehensions about potential misuse or leakage of users' personal information. These doubts and criticisms have undeniably cast a shadow over TikTok's reputation and image.

4.1.2 The competition and regulatory pressure of TikTok in overseas markets

In several regions, TikTok encounters formidable competition from indigenous social media platforms. These local platforms boast a profound understanding of their users' preferences and cultural nuances, posing a significant threat to TikTok's market dominance. Concurrently, regulatory bodies in certain countries have subjected TikTok to meticulous reviews, imposing constraints on its content and operational methodologies. Compliance with local statutes and stringent oversight has become obligatory. Such dual pressures—competitive and regulatory—present formidable challenges to TikTok's endeavors for overseas market expansion and operational continuity.

4.2 The coping strategies of TikTok

4.2.1 Strengthen communication and interaction with overseas users

First, TikTok can increase interaction with overseas users by holding online activities and launching exclusive functions for overseas users. For example, TikTok can regularly hold challenges for overseas users, encourage users to upload their own creative videos, and provide rewards and recognition. This can increase users' participation and loyalty to TikTok and improve users' stickiness. Secondly, TikTok can strengthen communication channels with overseas users. By establishing a feedback platform for overseas users, TikTok can know the needs and opinions of users in time, and make corresponding improvements and optimizations according to the feedback. In addition, TikTok can also communicate directly with users through social media platforms, emails, online customer service and other means to answer users' questions and enhance users' trust and satisfaction with TikTok [5].

4.2.2 The security measures to improve content verification and data

TikTok holds the potential to enhance its content oversight by leveraging advanced artificial intelligence technology and refined algorithms. This advancement enables more precise identification and filtration of content that falls outside community guidelines, thereby ensuring an enhanced user experience. Simultaneously, fortifying research, development, and implementation of cutting-edge data security technology remains pivotal. This step ensures the safeguarding of users' personal information against any potential breach or misuse. Furthermore, TikTok can bolster transparency by offering a clearer, more explicit privacy policy. This policy should delineate the objectives behind data collection and usage, empowering users with the choice to determine the sharing of their personal information. Such measures significantly contribute to augmenting users' control over their data privacy.

5. Conclusion

Upon examining the evolution of overseas social media platforms and their impact on China's global communication, it becomes evident that these platforms have significantly bolstered China's international outreach. Notably, TikTok, representing the forefront of overseas social media, has made considerable strides in permeating foreign markets and shaping China's global communication landscape. Yet, TikTok encounters obstacles in international discourse, such as public skepticism and regulatory scrutiny. Overcoming these challenges demands enhanced engagement with global users, fortified content oversight, and tighter data security measures. Ultimately, the symbiotic growth of overseas social media platforms and China's international communication is unmistakable. Through ongoing innovation and exploration, China's prowess in global communication can further flourish, augmenting its influence and competitive edge on the world stage.

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