

A Study on Live Streaming Bandwagon of CCTV Hosts in the Context of the New Era

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Abstract: *In recent years, Internet technology has propelled live streaming with product endorsements to become the most popular sales model. In early 2020, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had a particular impact on the real economy. In this context, to expedite the resumption of production, promote economic growth, and stimulate economic vitality, the central station CCTV initiated a live-streaming campaign. As a result, CCTV hosts transitioned from the newsroom to the electric power live streaming room, transforming their image from traditional hosts to live-streaming anchors. This paper aims to analyze the participation deficiencies of CCTV hosts during the live-streaming process and provide recommendations for future practices in this area.*

Keywords: *CCTV host; live streaming with goods; strategic research*

1. Introduction

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the actual economy has experienced a downturn. In this context, the trend of live streaming emerged. With the rapid development of the internet and new media in the new era, live streaming with product endorsements has found a platform for its growth. Participation in this live-streaming trend has become increasingly diverse, ranging from anchors to celebrities, entrepreneurs, and government officials. Notably, including CCTV hosts is particularly significant as they can effectively serve as opinion leaders in the mainstream media, thus laying a solid foundation for mass engagement.

2. Definition of live banding

Livestreaming with product endorsements involves new media platforms utilizing live methods to publicize and explain the products sold. Moreover, these platforms interact with the audience in real time through features like pop-ups and chat, ultimately facilitating the sale of goods. Since its inception, live streaming with product endorsements, known as live banding, has gained significant support and popularity among a wide range of audiences, offering a fresh sales approach in the new era.

2.1. High interactivity

Traditional sales typically involve users searching for the desired goods and browsing product page images and short videos to understand the products better. If they have questions, they can message customer service or refer to user reviews of similar products. However, this process only provides a partially assured shopping experience. Additionally, there can be delays in communication between the audience and the seller, resulting in unanswered feedback. In contrast, the live-streaming with product endorsements sales model has revolutionized consumer shopping habits. When watching a live stream, consumers can instantly see a comprehensive view of the goods and even raise their questions through "pop-ups." The anchor promptly addresses these inquiries during the live stream. For instance, the anchor will explain the fabric, fit, and pattern when showcasing clothing details. When customers ask about the correct size, the anchor also responds promptly. This two-way interaction satisfies consumers' desire to feel valued and establishes a stronger connection between the audience and the seller.

2.2. Validity

Traditional platform sales often fail to provide consumers with a comprehensive understanding of

the goods, leading to potential cognitive biases and a higher rate of returns. This discrepancy arises because the images on the platform may not accurately represent the real product, with issues like color inaccuracies or color loss. The single picture displayed on the platform cannot address these concerns individually. In comparison, live-streaming with product endorsements reduces the likelihood of such problems. For instance, the anchor can demonstrate clothing by wearing it personally and pairing it with shoes, hats, bags, and other accessories, offering consumers more inspiration for outfit ideas. Moreover, the anchor can wash the clothes live on camera, showcasing their colorfastness and durability, instilling consumer confidence when purchasing.

2.3. Wider coverage

E-commerce live-streaming offers a wide range of goods, from large items like cars and home appliances to smaller products like food and accessories. It has even extended to include sales on video platforms that offer memberships. Moreover, the audience reach of e-commerce live-streaming is extensive, catering to both urban areas and remote locations. As long as individuals have a smartphone, they can conveniently access and watch live streams featuring various goods.

2.4. Low operational and promotional costs

E-commerce live streaming showcases a product's unique features and selling points to consumers, eliminating unnecessary intermediaries. This approach significantly reduces the costs associated with product promotion. Moreover, while live streams are conducted in real time, the content remains accessible even after the broadcast ends. Consumers who missed the live stream can watch and share the replay, ensuring that the live stream content is disseminated multiple times. This not only reduces the operational and publicity costs for the product but also extends the reach of the live stream.

Additionally, the requirements for hosting live streams are less demanding compared to traditional e-commerce media. Hosts can efficiently conduct live streams with smartphones and a full light without investing significant manpower or financial resources. As a result, live streaming with product endorsements offers substantial cost savings compared to traditional e-commerce methods.

3. Analysis of the reasons why live-streaming bandwagons are sought after by the entire population

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, various offline brick-and-mortar consumption places, such as shopping malls, restaurants, and tourism and entertainment venues, have been severely impacted. It seems as if the entire society has pressed the pause button. During the epidemic, the concept of "quarantine" has become familiar, and people have consciously reduced their outings. With its advantage of "staying at home," online consumption has become the preferred choice for many consumers. As the economy continues to develop, people's consumption patterns have evolved. Consumers are no longer solely focused on satisfying their material needs through shopping; they now seek more experiential and entertaining aspects.

This shift in consumer preferences has contributed to the rise of live-streaming platforms like Jitterbug and Shutterbug. These platforms offer consumers a comprehensive shopping experience by providing images, videos, and interactive live streams with real-time product endorsements. Such developments rely on the continual advancements of internet technology^[1]. Notably, some influential live streamers have emerged as opinion leaders, attracting a large number of consumers. These live streamers demonstrate their influence by engaging intimately with their fans and sharing aspects of their personal lives. As a result, a stronger connection develops between these influencers and consumers, fostering an enhanced relationship.

4. Characteristics of a CCTV presenter's live bandwagon

4.1. Stronger credibility and influence

Undoubtedly, mainstream media holds substantial credibility and influence. The public places great trust in and identifies with mainstream media outlets and their hosts. These hosts have emerged as "opinion leaders" whom most consumers rely on due to their persuasive power and reliability.

In the traditional live-streaming process, consumers develop trust in the anchor over time and purchase products from their live room based on that trust. However, when CCTV hosts participate in live-streaming with product endorsements, consumers trust them based on their preexisting perceptions. The CCTV hosts' credibility helps standardize and bring transparency to the entire live-streaming process, which adds to the hosts' reputation. When CCTV hosts engage in live-streaming, they often achieve exceptional results, breaking audience records and selling out products as soon as they hit the shelves. The general public marvels at the performance of CCTV hosts during these live streams and praises the products. When a CCTV host is part of a live stream, consumers can purchase without considering any other factors—they just need to act quickly.

4.2. Enriching the Audience Experience and Creating a Sense of Personal Contrast

In the past, the hosts of CCTV, especially those on news programs, had a severe and dignified image that appeared in everyone's view. However, during live-streaming with product endorsements, CCTV hosts transform into "recommendation officers," incorporating their unique personalities into their language expression. While watching these live broadcasts, the audience no longer sees a host with a microphone who always maintains a severe demeanor. Instead, they observe a more relatable and authentic side of them, which satisfies the audience's desire for a certain level of voyeurism.

However, it is important to note that even CCTV hosts involved in live activities can experience slight imperfections. For example, during a live event with the theme of "for a better life," the usually meticulous CCTV host Kang Hui may accidentally forget to plug in a coffee machine when demonstrating its function. Similarly, Sa Beining may encounter unexpected technical difficulties while demonstrating the screen casting feature of a cell phone, requiring on-site staff assistance. These instances of the hosts teasing each other's mistakes add a touch of humanity to their images^[2]. Compared to the previous paragraph, where the hosts were described as being "flawless," such small mistakes inadvertently make the CCTV hosts appear more relatable and bridge the gap between them and the audience.

4.3. Balancing culture and entertainment

In mainstream media's live streaming campaigns, they carefully select prominent hosts who possess outstanding business skills and are widely recognized by the public. These hosts are paired with internet celebrities and celebrities with a solid fan base, creating a synergistic effect. During the live-streaming with product endorsements, CCTV hosts frequently deliver impactful and memorable lines, shaping a media image that is both dynamic and reserved, breaking the audience's stereotypical perception of CCTV hosts.

Furthermore, CCTV hosts also incorporate cultural and entertainment elements into their live broadcasts, adding more depth to the content. For example, Zhu Guangquan, known for his rhyming sentences in news broadcasts, extends his unique style to recommending famous noodles during a live stream. He lamented, "Walking on the shore of the East Lake, overlooking the Yellow Crane Tower, you can marvel at the Jingchu culture. However, not trying these hot noodles would be such a shame."^[3] When introducing Suizhou mushrooms, Zhu Guangquan also takes the opportunity to elucidate the history and culture of Suizhou to the audience, imparting a genuine sense of China's rich history and culture. Such instances perfectly combine the cultural knowledge of CCTV hosts with witty humor in the language, showcasing the unique cultural attributes of CCTV hosts. This fusion of erudition and humor has established CCTV hosts as the epitome of successful live-streaming with product endorsements, setting a challenging benchmark.

4.4. Back-office front-loading to close the distance between transmission and reception

As public figures, CCTV presenters are constantly under public scrutiny. As representatives of mainstream media, they must continually update themselves and stay in touch with the needs of the masses. Through the help of new media platforms, such as live-streaming with product endorsements, CCTV hosts can break away from their fixed images and present a more relatable and multifaceted persona. This helps bridge the gap between the hosts and their audience.

In the audience's previous perception, CCTV hosts were often seen in a fixed role, primarily within the newsroom. However, the boundaries between their front and backstage personas become blurred when they step outside that setting to participate in variety shows or live-streaming with product

endorsements. This allows the audience to see the hosts as more three-dimensional figures. During live broadcasts, hosts like Nigemaiti break down the perceived barriers between themselves and the audience. For example, while explaining products like washing machines, refrigerators, and dishwashers, Kang Hui might jokingly mention the presence of teleprompters, revealing a behind-the-scenes detail. Additionally, Nigemaiti might address the audience as if they were friends, using phrases like "big mom" and encouraging them to make purchases rather than just taking pictures. These seemingly casual statements further blur the line between the front and backstage personas of the hosts, allowing the audience to gain a more intimate understanding of their daily lives and relaxed state of speech^[4].

5. Problems in the process of live banding by CCTV presenters

Live streaming with product endorsements, as a new form of consumption, has profoundly impacted people's lives. The participation of CCTV hosts in this trend undoubtedly has a positive effect. However, it is also worth acknowledging that there may be some issues in the process.

5.1. Traditional hosting habits are more pronounced

Typically, traditional "anchors" who engage in live-streaming with product endorsements are skilled in various sales techniques and clearly understand product selling points. On the other hand, CCTV hosts are traditionally trained and educated in their respective professions, which may result in certain limitations regarding sales-focused live streaming. Unlike traditional TV programs, live-streaming with product endorsements emphasizes the "live" aspect and often lasts several hours. This necessitates the host's ability to grasp and introduce the product features and characteristics accurately. When CCTV hosts collaborate with other popular live streamers, their hosting habits and styles may become apparent during live broadcasts.

5.2. Over-reliance on other live streaming platforms

Mainstream media uses a wide range of platforms for live-streaming with product endorsements, including Taobao and Jingdong. However, the success of these live streams often relies heavily on these platforms. Mainstream media may also synchronize live streams on their WeChat video channels, but these platforms remain essential. For example, traditional e-commerce platforms like Taobao and Pinduoduo have accumulated a large fan base. Leveraging these platforms for live-streaming with product endorsements undoubtedly attracts more consumers and drives economic growth. However, once hosts and consumers move away from these platforms, audience engagement may significantly decrease, resulting in less consistency and interaction between hosts and consumers.

5.3. Lack of product knowledge

For various reasons, CCTV hosts may have limited knowledge about the products they are promoting. During Zhu Guangquan and Li Jiaqi's initial live broadcast, Zhu Guangquan occasionally consulted his script while explaining the product. Additionally, Nigemaiti made a mistake by reporting the wrong price while promoting Mengniu's yogurt. Such errors are less commonly observed among traditional e-commerce hosts. Subsequently, Li Jiaqi displayed a markedly professional performance, highlighting the contrasting abilities between the two CCTV hosts.

5.4. Inadequate presentation of products

During the initial stages of live-streaming with product endorsements, CCTV hosts often focus on providing explanations rather than adequately demonstrating the goods. For instance, when introducing certain food items, they may only provide a simple display without personally trying or tasting the product. As a result, some of the goods' unique characteristics may not be effectively presented.

In contrast, some leading anchors utilize personal practice to showcase the product's features, enhancing consumer trust. For example, when selling lipstick, Li Jiaqi tries different colors, allowing consumers to judge the effects of various shades on the lips visually. Moreover, during the color testing process, Li Jiaqi elaborately explains the other characteristics of the lipstick, such as whether it stains the cup and which color suits different groups of individuals. This approach provides a practical demonstration and imparts detailed information to consumers, fostering trust and understanding in the

process.

6. Advice for CCTV presenters on live bandwagons

6.1. Create a personal IP image to emphasize personal charm

Indeed, the emergence of programs like "Anchor Speak" and "CCTV Boys" has significantly increased the popularity and charisma of CCTV hosts. These programs have set up an IP image for the hosts, making them more relatable and engaging to viewers. It has also encouraged hosts to break away from the mainstream media's seriousness and incorporate lively and conversational language during live broadcasts with goods. A great example is the collaboration between Sa Beining and Li Jiaqi during a live stream. Sa Beining improvised the opening with his unique language expression style, using phrases like "Today's Law" to inject humor into a severe atmosphere. This showcased Sa Beining's distinct personality and contributed to his IP image-shaping success.

In the new era, the audience's aesthetic interests have evolved, and they no longer find satisfaction in a monotonous and predictable media image. Therefore, hosts must innovate and develop their styles, creating a unique and charismatic image that resonates with the audience. To achieve this, hosts need to focus on enhancing their professional abilities, cultural absorption, and personal growth. Continuous self-improvement in knowledge and presentation skills will allow hosts to enrich themselves and stay connected with the evolving audience expectations on different platforms. By doing so, hosts will be better able to create engaging and relatable content that captivates viewers.

6.2. Comprehensively show the characteristics of products from multiple angles

Showcasing products comprehensively and engagingly is crucial for professional hosts during live broadcasts. CCTV hosts, in particular, can provide a more in-depth understanding of the products by explaining them from multiple angles.

A great way to achieve this is through personal interaction with the products during the live stream. For instance, when introducing food items, the host can taste them on camera. By doing so, they can visually and verbally describe the flavors and characteristics of the food using figurative language that evokes a sense of deliciousness. This approach helps consumers better understand the product and creates a connection between the host's experience and their desires.

By incorporating such interactive and immersive techniques, CCTV hosts can enhance their presentations and make them more compelling to viewers. This approach allows hosts to go beyond simply describing the product's features and adds an experiential element that resonates with the audience. Ultimately, it helps create an intense desire among viewers to consume the showcased goods.

6.3. Adjusting your language at the right time

As we all know, "fast-paced" is often the main feature of live streaming with goods, whether it is the anchor's language rhythm or the overall atmosphere of the live room. Some professional live-streaming hosts opt for a faster speech speed when explaining and showcasing products. While this may create tension for the consumer, it also reflects the anchor's familiarity with the product.

When an articulate CCTV host encounters a fast-paced language anchor, there is a clear distinction between the two regarding language status and speech speed. Therefore, when a CCTV host decides to enter the live room for live e-commerce, they need to adjust their language status at the appropriate time. This adjustment helps them better adapt to the rhythm of live e-commerce.

7. Conclusions

Live banding is more than just a temporary fad. Following the epidemic, CCTV proactively embraced the live-streaming trend, playing a pivotal role in economic recovery and instilling confidence in the public. The values and cultural heritage showcased by CCTV hosts serve as a blueprint for ensuring the sustainable and flourishing growth of future e-commerce anchors.

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