

The Influences on Supermarkets' Goods' Marketing under the Normalization of COVID-19

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Abstract: This research is to investigate the way traditional holiday's goods changes in China during COVID-19. This research also aims to find out the reasons behind unreasonable consumption during traditional holidays of Chinese and how Chinese supermarkets promote the goods they would like to sell. The authors of the research employ case studies to which is part of qualitative research to conduct a synthesis of the explanations behind the scenario. The results of this research are that, the sales of the goods of traditional holidays remain about the same as last year despite a rise in online shopping. In addition, the supermarkets adopt decorations such as paper lamps, songs for the new year, and promotional cards that successfully raise the sales of some goods such as snacks, milk, alcohol, and health care products. This research is applicable to Chinese and foreign traders who would like to see a holistic picture of how Chinese goods change in holidays under the background that there is COVID-19 in the globe.

Keywords: Supermarkets, Goods' Marketing, COVID-19

1. Research Background

COVID-19 during the Spring Festival in 2020 has caused a huge impact and influence on the economic and social operation of China and even the world. Many industries have been affected, including the retail industry. Hypermarkets are not only important places for daily shopping, but also important parts of the retail industry. The purchases of daily necessities and the purchases of food and clothing are inseparable from hypermarkets, whose ups and downs are closely related to the level of economic development. COVID-19 has varying degrees of impact on the retail industry as a whole and retail channels.

"Based on a comprehensive analysis, the situation of epidemic prevention and control will steadily improve in 2021. At present, the international epidemic is slowing down steadily, and China has achieved normalcy." In a bitter year-long battle against the epidemic, the number of confirmed cases in China has fallen sharply. Especially in March, the epidemic situation will be further calm.

During the epidemic period, the continuous operation of hypermarkets and supermarkets not only stabilized the business' income, but also carried a significant social responsibility. It has little impact on the overall business of the supermarket and is relatively stable in the overall downward trend of the industry. At the same time, the epidemic has to some extents exposed the "weak connection" between hypermarkets and customers. Compared with e-commerce enterprises, hypermarkets and supermarkets are still in a passive position in the connection with customers. The important constraint factor of new retail supermarkets during the epidemic period is the distribution bottleneck. Take Freshippo as an example, its business model of "mainly online, supplemented by offline" and "rapid delivery" determines its excellent performance during the epidemic period, and it has acquired a large number of new users during the epidemic. Compared with new retail supermarkets, traditional operators showed a slight disadvantage in the epidemic. At this stage and the strict management of the epidemic, some enterprises have to begin to use the advantages of the Internet to broaden their business scope. Take Sun Art Retail (RT-Mart + Auchan) as an example. In 2020, Sun Art's retail sales revenue reached 95.486 billion yuan, with a year-on-year growth of 0.1%. Of this, revenue from sales of goods was \$91.984 billion, an increase of \$705 million or 0.8% compared with \$91.279 billion in the same period last year. Driven by the

epidemic, Sun Art Retail's revenue increased in the first half of 2020, while in the second half, there was a certain degree of year-on-year decline. Also because of the epidemic, its home business is growing rapidly. In the second half of 2020, Sun Art Retail's daily order volume in first-tier cities will exceed 2,000 stores. The average daily order volume of stores in low tier cities is close to 1000. Overall, we saw an increase from an average daily order volume of 750 stores in the first quarter of 2020 and an average daily order volume of 950 stores in the second quarter. [3]

It is not difficult to find out that the application of the Internet can provide accurate and comprehensive data analysis for the marketing direction of hypermarkets, and make use of big data to analyze the consumer psychology. At the same time, combined with product information, it can make reasonable deployment, which is more scientific and efficient compared with the traditional business model.

The development of online platforms and the provision of home delivery services are opportunities for hypermarkets brought by the epidemic. Meanwhile, challenges are also emerging. The first challenge faced by hypermarkets is from e-commerce giants, such as with "JDtohome" and "Tmall" competition. The second challenge is Producer's direct business model, it will take a large part of traditional business. The rise of "live broadcasting with goods" is one of the more prominent forms. From factories, supermarkets to fields, internet celebrity uses "We Media" platform to carry out live-streaming sales. As a result, many products do not need to be directly delivered to the hands of consumers through distributors, on the one hand, it saves the price difference earned by middlemen for consumers, on the other hand, producers and operators also save a lot of sales costs, thus causing a decline in sales of similar products.

The trend toward normalization of COVID-19, which brings both opportunities and challenges to the operation and sales of traditional large supermarkets, and the integration of online and offline development has become an irreversible trend.

2. Traditional holiday commodities were studies through the establishment of experimental and control groups (the lantern festival, for example)

In lantern festival, sweet dumplings which is called tangyuan in Chinese is a Chinese traditional dish that has the symbolism of reunion, so our group went to Lian Hua supermarket to do some researches. In the day, tangyuan was displayed in a freezer, and dumpling in another freezer, so tangyuan is experimental group and dumpling is control group. After 10 minutes observation, we drew a diagram to show how many people choose commodities. [4]

Table 1

Experimental group(person)	Control group (person)
32	6

By looking at the chart, we can find out holiday goods have great potential for consumption. In order to facilitate research and know what kind of people like that choose traditional holiday commodities, we classify each guest who choose tangyuan.

Table 2

Based on the experimental group	
elder	20
Young people	3
Housewife (It can be clearly observed, so list)	9

We found that the desire for buying all kinds of traditional holiday goods in different consumer groups is different, and that if we can find out the main consumer groups to design product, the research will be surprisingly effective.

Meanwhile, consumers are more would to buy traditional and semi-traditional holiday goods, new holiday merchandise is less selected.

3. Compare weekday supermarkets with holiday supermarkets

By compare weekday supermarkets with holiday supermarkets, our group find supermarkets will make a lot of changes at the festival to increase sales. In festival, supermarkets will add a lot of red, gold and other festive colors to attract the attention of consumers. And festive music is essential such as "good

luck". In addition, scenes are arranged more closely. For example, many large dolls with the characteristics of the Spring Festival and annual goods be put in shelves which located in entrance. Meanwhile many red packets which is very profitable were located in manual checkout area and machine checkout area. Because compared with blessings in online, Chinese people prefer use red envelopes to convey blessings. Then based on the need for gift-giving, sales of supermarket cards have also become more tight. [5]

4. Observe the gathering of consumers in supermarkets during the Spring Festival

The number of customers in the food section during the holiday season is significantly higher than that in the electronics and household goods section, which coincides with the need to entertain and give gifts during the holiday season. Different regions also attract different groups of people. The snacks area mainly attracts young people, while the elderly are more inclined to health products area and alcohol area. Perhaps it is because young people don't need to worry about gifts and favors during the Spring Festival, but just think about what they need during the festival.

5. The effects of corona virus on holiday merchandises

Because of the corona virus, the species of holiday merchandises have changed a lot. Observing from the local supermarket, we found that the imported goods are influenced by the corona virus more than any other products in China. What's more, imported cold chain products like sea food can seldom be found in the supermarket. If there are any, they are also labeled as imported. Imported goods such as snacks and fruits still exist and the number of them are not that small. It shows that the demand of such products are still very big in China. During the Spring Festival, many people still come to the supermarket to buy their needed products for the new year. In particular, the flow of people in the exhibition area of Spring Festival goods has been very large. During my observation, the snacks gift package was replenished once. Although there has been a lot of copycat consumption because of the corona virus, such as the sales volume of Shuanghuanglian and face masks are very large, most people still shop rationally and buy the products just because they need. However, people's enthusiasm for promotional products is still very high. No matter young people or older generations, one plus one or discounted or fully reduced products will still bring a certain increase in sales. However, the young people mainly buy the goods they like, while the older ones will focus on the practical and demand, such as milk and rice. The health industry has benefited most from the corona virus. The epidemic has made the public aware of the importance of immunity and health. Many immunity-enhancing health products and health-related food and beverage products are sold well in supermarkets and have become good gifts during the epidemic. [6]

6. Changes in shopping patterns under the epidemic situation

Under the epidemic situation, in order to reduce the contact between people, the way of shopping has become various, not limited to the physical supermarket and then push a shopping cart shopping. More people choose to place orders through takeout, which is delivered directly to their homes by the takeout man, which is convenient and reduces the risk of interpersonal contact. Or they choose to pick them up at the store after placing orders through mini programs on mobile phones, which reduces the risk of gathering for a long time in public places. Through observation, it is found that the delivery man usually waits at the front desk, waiting until there are a certain amount of orders. According to the different weight and volume of each order, 3-4 orders or more will be accumulated and then sent to the customer together. Within half an hour, I saw three delivery men pick up their orders. I found on the supermarket's APP and Ele that the delivery time of Century Lian hua is usually within one hour. After reading the comments of customers on the delivery, 97% of them are favorable, saying that the delivery is very fast and convenient, and it is a very happy experience of shopping.

7. Conclusion

The conclusions of this research are the followings. To begin with, although the existence of COVID-19 is supposed to dampen the desire to consume, there is still consumption because Chinese supermarkets use special promotional methods during holidays. Firstly, there is change of color, decorations of shops, and music to cater to the environment of the holidays. These methods successfully stimulate consumption

as people feel the eager to celebrate the holidays and the red color add the sense of warmth to supermarkets as well. Secondly, there is promotional method such as bundling, red pockets, multiple discounts, and holiday gift cards. These methods explain why people make purchases as they provide shopping in holidays more desirable. Additionally, the Chinese tradition of giving and receiving red pockets also explain why people value the goods produced through these promotional methods so much. Other than the promotional methods, we observe that there is a change of sales of different types of products as people are content with the government's control of COVID-19. Firstly, the sales of snacks increase this year as more young people are relaxed with purchasing snacks at supermarkets. Secondly, people have concerns for cold-chain products but there is still the elderly who buy it as again, they trust the government for the control of the virus. Another support for this type of products is the prove of the nuclei acid testing. In addition, holiday's products such as alcohol increase as the elderly require it. Moreover, the number of people who buy daily products such as clothes or electronic products increase as more cities are safe for people to go out and shop in holidays in COVID-19. Another observation is that online shopping goes up this year and we find a similar shopping pattern in online supermarkets as people buy more snacks and less cold-chain products. Online shopping makes purchasing more convenient for people and infecting COVID-19 less possible since individuals could finish shopping at home.

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