

Analysis the influence of “web celebrity” phenomenon on young consumer’s perception in the perspective of new media -- taking cosmetic industry as example

Yifei Yang

*Culture and Entertainment Programming Center of CCTV, CCTV High-tech Television Development Co., Ltd., Beijing, China
1229048504@qq.com*

Abstract: *This research mainly explores the influence of the "web celebrity" phenomenon on young consumers' perception of social media. Taking Kylie Jenner's successful marketing of cosmetics company as background, from the perspective of consumer's perception to discuss the research question in depth on Instagram. It analyzes consumers' perceptions through collecting data on social media to detect the perceived value and satisfaction and e-WOM communication. The e-WOM effect tested of Kylie Cosmetics in this experiment is different from our stereotype. Finally, it indicates that consumers have a high degree of recognition of Kylie Cosmetics.*

Keywords: *Web celebrity, Consumer's Perception, Social media, eWOM Communication, Instagram*

1. Introduction

With the development of digital technology, social media as a new type of medium has increasingly enriched the lifestyle of the public. Due to the rapid development of social media in recent years, ordinary people have the opportunity to become "Internet celebrities" in the media. They not only become famous through the platform of social media, but they can also use this opportunity to show their value, propose their opinions and even create their own brand[10]. As young people pay more and more attention to their personal image, the cosmetic industry has developed rapidly, and "beauty influencers" have emerged [5]. They use the convenient online platform to showcase their beauty skills and ideas, so that young people who are passionate about social media can notice them. Under this circumstance, the cosmetics industry has very few discourse right from those cosmetics companies, but is controlled by "beauty influencers" who are familiar with the operation of the new media [1]. Most "beauty influencers" are cosmetic lovers or practitioners of the cosmetic industry. They have their own views on cosmetic and are not as high as celebrities. In contact with consumers, they can gain their trust more than advertising in traditional media, which just meets the company's demand for marketing channels. The rapid development of the “web celebrity” economy represents not only the successful interaction of high-value “beauty influencers”with fans, but also the success of connecting consumer demand for products and the supply chain. Therefore, how “beauty influencers” influences consumers' awareness of purchasing cosmetic product is a question worthy of in-depth study.

2. Research Background

The Kardashian family has always been the most talked about in the American social circle, and each of the Kardashian sisters has extremely high business value. The youngest Kylie Jenner has become the person with the most assets in the family, and her personal wealth is about 900 million US dollars [3].

She started appearing in the family reality show when she was nine years old. Since childhood, many audience have followed her, and her lips have become fuller little by little while the audience watching. She was not the center of the topic, but because of the change in her lips, she was discussed by more and more people. According to reports, she felt inferior to her too thin lips and was rejected by a boy as a child, so after growing up, she began to reshape her lips. She did not admit that the public had talked about her plastic surgery, but also said that it was a secondary development. Not only has her change caused much controversy online, her lips have given her a high degree of discussion.

However, Kylie Jenner has participated in the shooting of reality TV since she was a child, and likes to post sexy photos on social media, which makes her have hundreds of millions of fans on social media. In this era of big data, she knows how to make use of people's high degree of discussion on her lips to profit. In 2015, when she graduated from high school, Kylie launched a lip gloss set, which was unexpectedly sold out soon. She soon launched other cosmetic products and formally established "Kylie Cosmetics" in 2016. With her influence on social media and various limited edition products, the sales and development speed of "Kylie Cosmetics" is staggering. Not only did she personally endorse the brand, she also used her huge fan base on social media to promote and market the brand. Therefore, less than two years after the establishment of this cosmetic brand, she generated \$420 million in revenue [3]. Benham (2018) described her entrepreneurial behavior as "leading all creative work in product and communication based on its unparalleled global influence through social media."

3. Methodology: data scraping and visualization

I would like to take the following categories to investigate the customers' perception about Kylie Cosmetics.

(1) Consumer perceived quality

Positive: helpful, useful, good, beautiful...

Negative: bad, harmful, useless, distrust...

Customer perceived value can be defined as a preliminary judgment on the overall attributes and superiority of the product when the customer faces the product [12].

(2) Customer satisfaction

Satisfied: happy, enjoy, wonderful, glad...

Unsatisfied: angry, mad, frustrated, awful...

Customer satisfaction is a measure of the degree of customer satisfaction with the company's products and services. Measuring customer satisfaction can help companies change their products and services to the greatest extent to adapt to the market and satisfy customers [7].

(3) Electronic Word-Of-Mouth (eWOM)

Word-of-mouth communication refers to an informal interpersonal communication between non-commercial transmitters and receivers to disseminate information about the perceived product [6]. Word-of-mouth communication is highly persuasive and therefore highly influential [8]. Consumers often rely more on informal or interpersonal information sources in purchasing decisions than on more formal or organized information sources such as advertising [8]. The measurement is about that if customers are willing to share and introduce the commodities or firms to others. As far as marketing research is concerned, word-of-mouth communication conceptual models are mostly built from the perspective of consumer (ie, the successor) satisfaction results, and customer satisfaction stems from the comparison between the quality of customer perception and the quality of customer expectations. While positive word-of-mouth communication affects consumers' purchasing decisions, it also raises consumers' expectations of the product and its services [8]. In the digital era, the traditional WOM has changed into new form, as electronic WOM (eWOM), referring as due to the emergence of new technologies such as online reviews, word-of-mouth communication triggered by consumers talking about product-related information online [11]. The biggest difference between electronic word-of-mouth and traditional word-of-mouth is that intimate social networks are no longer the basis of communication. Consumers' share of word-of-mouth is not necessarily family, friends, or strangers. Some scholars believe that the high information detail, low cost and high portability of electronic word of mouth are the essential characteristics that distinguish it from traditional word of mouth [8].

4. Case Study

I selected #kyliecosmetics, #kylielipkit, #kylieskin these three hashtags on Instagram, and randomly selected 500 post's comments as a data source under each hashtag to analyze consumer's perception in consumer perceived quality, customer satisfaction, and eWOM.

#kyliecosmetics: There are more than 4 million posts under the hashtag #kyliecosmetics, which is

enough to show that consumers are very active in participating in this hashtag. Kylie Cosmetics is the name of Kylie Jenner's cosmetics company, so analyzing the data of the comments under this hashtag can give a certain degree of consumer's perception about the overall cosmetics products of her brand.

#kylielipkit: As mentioned in the previous case study, Kylie said that she has always felt extremely insecure on her lips and even a little inferiority. She always hopes that her lips will become thicker before she becomes obsessed with full lips. When she was the most controversial and everyone focused on her lips, she sold the first cosmetic product Kylie Lip Kit. Therefore, the comments under the hashtag #kylielipkit are the perception of consumers about her lip products and are very representative.

#kylieskin: Kylie Cosmetic launched a new skincare series Kylie Skin in May 2019, but the new skincare products are much controversial. Other influencers such as Jeffreestar have evaluated Kylie Skin, and a facial scrub containing walnut shell powder is believed to be harmful to the skin. Consumers have mixed opinions about this series of products. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the comments under the most controversial hashtag #kylieskin.

In analyzing consumer perceived quality, I will import the collected data into the analyze tool to detect consumer perceived quality's attitude towards her cosmetic brand by setting some index words that represent positive attitudes and some index words that represent negative attitudes; In the analysis of consumer satisfaction, I will also import the collected data into the analyze tool to detect consumer satisfaction for her cosmetic brand by setting some index words that represent satisfaction and some index words that represent dissatisfaction. In order to test the status of eWOM in this experiment, I will visualize which user is mentioned in the comment data which relationship graph, and more intuitively analyze the connection of word-of-mouth communication between consumers [8].

5. Findings

The decision of consumers to purchase commodities is divided into three steps: one is the consumers' initial recognition of the brand and perception of the external evaluation of the product information. The second is that consumers combine their own cognition to process the product information again. The third is to form an inherent attitude or purchase motivation for the brand. This judgment of the brand will affect consumers' purchasing behavior, attitudes and perceptions[9]. Therefore, research consumer's perception of Kylie Cosmetics is an important part of studying the reasons for the success of the brand. Under the Instagram hashtags #kyliecosmetics, #kylieskin, #kylielipkit, I collected comments under 500 posts, and collected 2418, 2746, and 2140 comments respectively as data sources for analysis.

5.1 Consumer Perceived Quality

I use the positive index words: adorable, amused, awesome, beautiful, beneficial, benefit, cheerful, comfortable, cute, fine, good, gorgeous, great, green, helpful, kind, lovely, lucky, nice, pretty, smart, sustainable, thankful, and the negative index words: evil, obnoxious, bad, cheat damaged, dirty, distrust, dizzy, foolish, harm, helpless, impaired, negative, selfish, shit, terrible, toxic, useless, worthless, index in comments under these hashtags. Figure 1 visualises the number of positive attitude posts and negative attitude posts under the hashtags. The result shows that there are more consumers with positive attitudes towards the brand than those with negative attitudes.

Through the analysis of the user attitudes in these posts, it can be seen that most users' attitudes towards Kylie Cosmetics and its series of products perceived quality are positive.

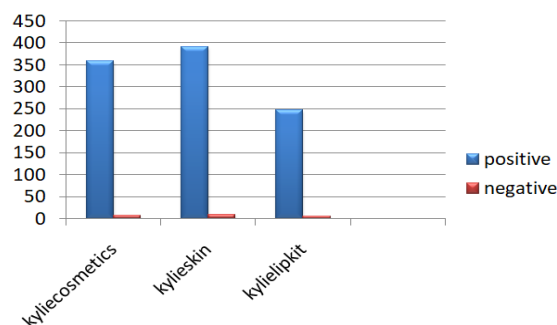


Figure 1: Consumer Perceived Quality

5.2 Customer Satisfaction

I used index words representing satisfaction: agree, appreciate, brave, enjoy, excited, enthusiastic, fine, fond, funny, glad, great, grateful, happy, joy, like, love, perfect, pleasant, proud, satisfied, successful, thanks, thoughtful, useful, well, wonderful, and index words representing dissatisfaction :affectation,angry,annoy,anxious,ashamed,awful,boerd,boring,disgusting,dislike,distribut ,dull,embarrassed,hyocrisy,jealous,lazy,nasty,nervous.rubbish,sick of, testy, upright, upset, worried, index in comment under these hashtags. Figure 2 visualises the number of satisfied posts and unsatisfied posts under the hashtags. The result shows that there are more consumers satisfied with the brand than those who unsatisfied.

Through the analysis of the user satisfaction in these posts, it can be seen that most users' satisfied with Kylie Cosmetics and its series of products.

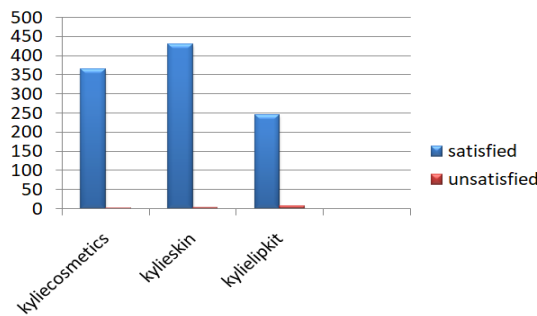


Figure 2: Customer Satisfaction

5.3 Electronic Word-Of-Mouth (eWOM)



Figure 3: eWOM relationship diagram

	Sample Size	Density	Reciprocity	Centralization	Modularity
#kyliecosmetics	2418	0.039	1	0.305	0.531
#kylieskin	2746	0.052	1	0.512	0.389
#kylielipkit	2140	0.058	1	0.623	0.319

Figure 4: eWOM propagation effect parameters

Figure 3 is the user's relationship diagram under the comments of the Instagram hashtags #kyliecosmetics, #kylieskin, #kylielipkit, respectively. According to the visualization in Figure 3 the proportion of posts that have mentioned others or replied in posts is relatively in majority, which means that most consumers would like to share the brand to others. Then through the four measurements on Netlytic (shown as Figure 4) about the network and interaction, we can research further about eWOM under the three hashtags.

“Density is a proportion of existing ties to the total number of possible ties in a network. The closer this measurement is to 1, the more close-knit the community/conversation, which suggests participants are talking with many others.

Reciprocity is a proportion of ties that show two-way communication in relation to the total number of existing ties. A higher value indicates many participants have two-way conversation.

Centralization measures the average degree centrality of all nodes within a network. When a network has a high centralization - value closer to 1, it suggests there are a few central participants who dominate the flow of information in the network.

Modularity helps to determine whether the clusters found represent distinct communities in the network. Higher values of modularity indicate clear divisions between communities.”[4].

Outcomes shows these hashtags have common features: density and modularity are low; reciprocity and centralization are high. I argue that participations under the hashtags is relatively loose, centralized and diverse.

In sum, by analyzing the comments under these three hashtags, I found that most consumers' perceived quality of this brand shows a positive attitude, and consumer satisfaction is also relatively high, most comments are positive and friendly. This result shows that the consumer consciousness of this brand has a positive effect. As mentioned before, although a certain series of cosmetics by Kylie Cosmetics is controversial, it can be seen from the data analysis that most consumers still like this brand. In addition, from Figure 3, it can also be seen that the connections between users are very close, the degree of centralization is very high, and electronic word-of-mouth communication between users has achieved very good results. Many users mentioned others under these hashtags, and the mentioned people mentioned the next user. In addition, word-of-mouth information has a high degree of integrity, and is often based on the user's personal experience. It is of interest to the user and is closely related to it. It can truly and comprehensively reflect product information. On the basis of a positive attitude towards Kylie Cosmetics and high satisfaction, users are willing to recommend brands they think are good to relatives, friends, etc. on social media, thus forming a good information dissemination and communication effect, making Kylie Cosmetics have a very good word-of-mouth marketing.

6. Conclusion and Discussion

In conclusion, the success of Kylie Jenner's cosmetic company is inseparable from her character setting, her company's brand marketing, and consumer acceptance of her products. Kylie's cleverness lies in her understanding of consumer psychology. Based on Kylie's personal and her company's marketing efforts, consumers' perceived value and satisfaction with the brand are relatively high, and the effect of e-WOM communication is also ideal. Although in our stereotype, the effect of e-WOM communication of controversial beauty products is not very satisfactory, through this research, it is found that the negative comments of a small group of users have not greatly affected the effect of e-WOM communication. When the general consumers' awareness of this brand is more positive, the products of this brand will naturally have higher sales. In the long term, Kylie Cosmetics will form a virtuous circle, and this cosmetic company is relatively successful.

In addition, I also got some enlightenment based on this research. The “web celebrity” phenomenon has given birth to new propaganda methods and business models, and it has a great impact on young

consumers' perceptions. The phenomenon of "web celebrity" has gone from simply gaining attention to now forming a profit-oriented industrial chain, and young consumers have gradually valued the reference value of opinion leaders. Moreover, in online marketing, companies should pay attention to the perceived value and satisfaction of consumers, and often organize activities that can enhance the effect of e-WOM communication. If a company has a product with a negative comments trend, in addition, to quickly improve product quality unexpectedly, it should also collect consumer satisfaction and other data on time, and use some social media campaigns to make the product's e-WOM communication effective.

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