DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY RESEARCH ON SPORT BRANDS: CASE OF LINING AND XTEP, CHINA

Hao Xiang,

Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep- Thailand

Tubagus Achmad Darodjat

Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep- Thailand

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project is to determine the impact of digital marketing on Chinese sports brands through a case study of the integration and comparison of two Chinese sports brands-Lining and Xtep. Provide reference for these two brands to better use digital marketing. This is mainly by showing the digital marketing platforms/channels of these two brands and discussing the impact (positive/negative) of this kind of digital marketing on these two brands, in order to fill the gaps in the previous research on the integrated use of Chinese sportswear brands; in addition, This research further defines the challenges/obstacles that these two brands face when using digital marketing, and how they respond to these challenges and make better use of digital marketing based on consumers.

Keywords: Digital marketing, sports brand, digital marketing platform**.**

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing has brought greater development space and profits to brand fashion. The dispersion of time and changes in consumer consumption habits, mobile, wireless, weibo, video, multi-screen, portal, social, big data, etc., have made digital marketing communication more and more abundant, and digital marketing continues to change. Continuously improve influence compared with the intense digital marketing practice, the theoretical research of digital marketing lags behind, for example, in the field of digital marketing. Most research focuses on introducing specific operational cases or annual summaries in the field of digital marketing, but lacks in-depth research. theoretical analysis, practice requires the guidance of advanced theories. The theoretical lag will inevitably affect the understanding of digital marketing and the development of digital marketing.

The nature of digital marketing determines its long-term development trend and also determines its relationship with traditional media. Existing research is limited to vague perception or description of the status quo of digital marketing, the importance of digital marketing also applies to sports brands.

Li Ning Company is a famous gymnast Li Ning was founded. Li Ning Company was established in 1990. After 30 years of exploration, has gradually become the representative of China's leading international sports brands. Li Ning Company to adopt a multi-brand business development strategy. In addition to its own core brand Li Ning (Li-Ning), but also has a brand Lotto (Lotto), Eagle Brand (AIGLE), heart brand brand (Z-DO). In addition, Li Ning also holds a controlling stake in Shanghai Double Happiness Group and a wholly-owned acquisition of Triumph sports.

As one of the earliest domestic sports brands, Li-Ning has dozens of group companies at home and abroad, and its business includes brand design, sales, manufacturing, and retail of various sports and leisure footwear, clothing, accessories and equipment series. In addition to its own core brand, Li Ning, the Li-Ning Group also owns the Kason brand (professional products such as badminton rackets, badminton, badminton sportswear,

shoes and accessories), the Double Happiness brand (table tennis and other sports equipment), and the Danskin brand (Women's footwear and accessories) and the AIGLE brand (Li Ning Group and AIGLE established a joint venture, which was granted a 50-year franchise by AIGLE to produce, promote, distribute and sell AIGLE brand outdoor sports in China Supplies). Develop multi-brand business and achieve extended coverage of product lines.

STUDY LITERATURE

Digital marketing means that in order to improve operational efficiency and achieve marketing goals, companies use Internet technology to plan and package the company's products on the Internet platform, and then use computer technology and communication technology to transfer the planned and packaged product information through digital media channels are delivered to consumer groups with actual needs. It is a high-level marketing activity that tracks consumer behavior characteristics based on data channels, analyzes consumer preferences, optimizes operating procedures, improves service quality and operating efficiency, and realizes marketing precision and data marketing effects. Through digital transmission, various information resources and channels are utilized to the maximum, thereby improving the benefit and efficiency of marketing activities, and promoting the comprehensive, high-speed and sustainable development of enterprises. Digital marketing was once considered to be a specialized marketing method in a special field. In recent years, due to the rapid development of the Internet, e-commerce has been favored by consumers. The establishment, promotion and development of corporate online businesses require the help and support of digital media. , In the era of e-commerce, digital marketing has become the most important marketing tool for companies in their promotion, sales and communication.

Digital marketing also has the characteristics of high efficiency, easy management, multimedia, cross-temporal and interactive. By using the unique properties of the Internet, more new functions have been multiplied. To sum up, digital media marketing can use Internet tools to combine company product information, promotional information, company plans and customer services with corporate marketing activities, and provide companies and customers with constant communication and casual interaction. , Online trading platform for transactions at any time, digital marketing methods, free from many restrictions of traditional marketing activities, can provide users with the richest information and the best services quickly and easily.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a combination of deductive and inductive reasoning research methods, a combination of case studies and questionnaire surveys, a qualitative research method, and a cross-sectional time perspective after data collection, all the data must be analyzed on the topic, and the data collection must be consistent with the rationality and validity of the research.

Thirty pedestrians from changsha city, hunan province, China were recruited. There is no restriction on gender distribution. The current research aims to explore the impact of digital marketing on sports brands. Li Ning and Xtep are used as case references. Therefore, candidates should at least have experience in using the Internet proficiently, have some purchasing power, and be able to make judgments with subjective will. They realized that they had been selected and considered the digital channels they usually use to understand Li Ning's products and content. This is the reason to choose people who are experienced in using the Internet rather than people who have no experience.

Table Summary of research methods

Study population	random selection
Research method	Multi-Methods
Research strategy	Qualitative case studies and surveys (questionnaire)
Time-horizon	Cross-sectional
Questionnaire design	Qualitative questionnaire
Collecting data	List of secondary data collection issues Questionnaire for primary data collection
Data Analysis	Thematic Analysis
Sampling	Simple sampling

DATA ANALYSIS

The main findings of the proposed research tool. via qualitative questionnaire to collect raw data. 20 materials are on display.

Through case studies, we found that Li Ning and Xtep used a variety of digital platforms and channels.

Table digital platforms/channels adopted by Li Ning and Xtep
(Source: Li Ning 2021; Xtep 2021)

		Li Ning	Xtep
1.	Official website	√	√
2.	Shopping website (Taobao, etc.)	√	√
3.	Instagram	√	√
4.	Twitter	√	√
5.	TikTok	√	√
6.	Watermelon video	√	√
7.	Weibo	√	√
8.	YouTube	√	

Li Ning's do a data analysis on Weibo and TikTok (as of 2021, the number of subscribers on this site is 10 times that of traditional brands). Xtep uses Weibo and TikTok as examples for comparative research. For so many platforms and channels are relevant to these two brands, it has difficulty with conducting a comprehensive evaluation about the research, therefore, we do a data analysis on the following two platforms. Among all digital marketing platforms/channels, Li Ning and Xtep use Douyin the most frequently, while the least one are YouTube and instagram. This can be reflected by the number of fans on these social media platforms.

Table number of fans of Li Ning and Xtep social media platforms
(Source: Li Ning 2021; Xtep 2021)

	Li Ning	Xtep
The most often used platform	Tiktok	Tiktok
The least often used platform	YouTube	Instagram
1. Instagram	190k followers	23k followers
2. Twitter	725 followers	112 followers
3. Tiktok	2million78k followers	927k followers
4. Watermelon video	2million70k followers	920k followers
5. Weibo	930k followers	260k followers
6. YouTube	6890 followers	Not applicable

At the mention of Li Ning, it uses Tiktok the most frequently. This can be explained ,Tiktok ,the most popular sharing platform in the world, can maintain the relationship between the brand and consumers through more charming visual materials(Statista 2019) . On the contrary, it uses Twitter the least. Because most consumers belong to eastern races, as Twitter is popular among weatern countries. That is, Twitter is rarely used in China, an Eastern country.

At the mention of Xtep, Tiktok and YouTube occupy the highest and lowest frequency of use respectively. As the most popular photo sharing platform, Tiktok, of course, becomes the most frequently used platforms of Xtep. By contrast, YouTube is of lower value (Statista 2019).

Table presents the positive impact of digital marketing in detail on Li Ning and Xtep. Table lists the benefits Li Ning and Xtep have gained from using digital marketing platforms.

The positive impact of digital marketing on Li Ning and Xtep

	LiNing	Xtep
1. Communication and interactivity between consumers	√	√
2. Unique brand image + brand awareness	√	√
3. Brand loyalty	√	√
4. Cost-efficient marketing	√	√
5. Consumer trust	√	

The negative aspects Li Ning and Xtep get from using the digital marketing platforms are detailed in the Table.

The negative impact of digital marketing on Li Ning and Xtep

Negative impacts	Li Ning	Xtep
Long-term investments of capital	√	√
Long-term investments of labor	√	√

The obstacles and countermeasures of Li Ning and Xtep in digital marketing.

Li Ning and Xtep's obstacles and countermeasures in digital marketing

	LiNing		Xtep	
	Barrier	Countermeasures	Barrier	Countermeasures
Effective use of social media	√		√	Influencer marketing
Maintenance of brand reputation and health	√	Employed a specialised platform	√	

Prior to the introduction of main findings referring to main data, leading in the survey objects firstly. Of all the 30 respondents in the survey, most belong to age group (18-30）. Therefore, the focus of this survey is young people (18-30 years old). Observing all these interviewees, it can be found most of them consume more than 151 yuan in sports products per month (100% of Li Ning consumers, and 80% of Xtep consumers). In addition, they used different and multiple products from these two sports brands.

State the characteristics of the survey subjects. Specifically, the age distribution of survey objects in Figure. details the ages of the 30 participants in the main data collection. The monthly consumption of consumers in Figure details their monthly consumption. Table details their use of Li-Ning and Xtep's products. The 15 objects of each brand used Li-Ning and Xtep products.
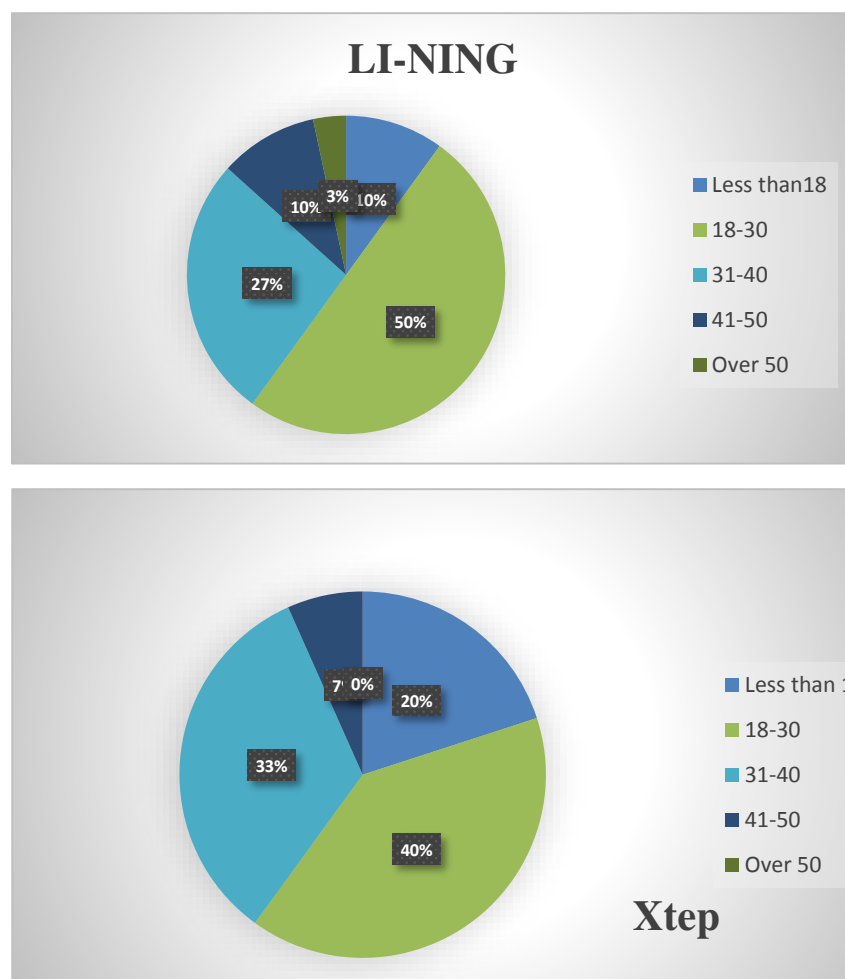

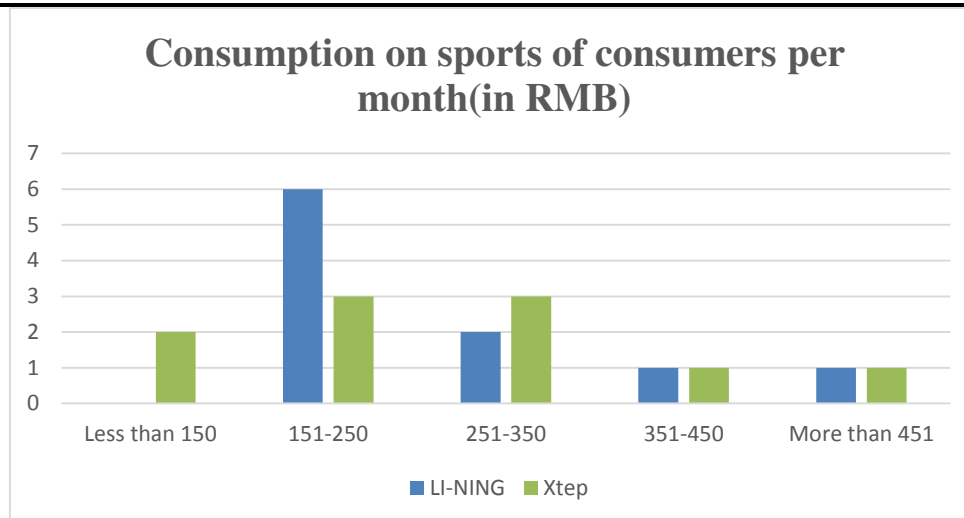Figure Distribution of age group pf respondents in the questionnaire survey

Figure consumption on sports of consumers per month

In summary, the important findings about the use of digital marketing. Li Ning and Xtep achieve research goals, including the use of digital platforms/channels (social media, official websites, shopping websites, etc.), the purpose of content (marketing), and the use of positive/negative influence and make better use of the respective recommendations of digital marketing.

CONCLUSION

This research takes two famous brands (Ning and Xtep) in China's sports products industry as targets, based on the data analysis of digital marketing relevant to the following four aspects: social media platforms, social media content, positive and negative effects of digital marketing. In consideration of the characteristics of the sports products industry in which Li Ning and Xtep brands are located, this research studies the efforts Li Ning and Xtep brands pay in digital marketing. Consequently, it reveals the importance of digital marketing to traditional sports brand in its business.

Based on the discussion and analysis, the following suggestions are made for the two major sports brands.

First of all, according to the discussion of topic 1, the two brands should increase the use of TikTok, while Li Ning and Xtep should decrease the use of Twitter and YouTube respectively because from the perspective of whether brands or consumers, TikTok is the most popular digital platform by contrast, the use rate of Twitter and YouTube is reversely lower.

Second, the two brands should demonstrate new or star products more frequently on digital platforms. In addition, Li Ning consumers concern about product tests and product information, while Xtep consumers more focus on sports product use tutorials, sales promotion and user reviews based on topic 2 reviews. Meanwhile, Li Ning should make the following efforts in the content presented on the digital marketing platform: 1) more consideration should be given to choosing European and American countries instead of only Asian countries; 2) put more information on social media; 3) Provide more Many fashion sports wear and use guidance for Xtep, 1) the content of the shopping platform should be interesting and attractive; 2) cooperate with sportswear bloggers.

Third,to positively affect consumers with higher conversion rates, brands should pay attention to the use of social media, in addition to other influences to determine previous research (communication and interaction with consumers, unique brand image and brand awareness, cost-effective marketing and Receive high brand loyalty and high consumer trust).

Finally, in addition to long-term investment in labor and capital, Li Ning was also criticized for its single sales

channel and insufficient target marketing strategy; Xtep was accused of a decline in brand identity resulting from disgusting advertising, single product, unclear product positioning and lack of interaction. As a result, these two brands should focus on these issues and work out feasible strategies.

REFERENCES

1) Chen Wei. (2009). Research on Digital Marketing Strategy in the Automobile Industry (Master's thesis, Fudan University).

2) Coker, L. S. (2011). Marketing in the Age of Google: Your Online Strategy IS Your Business Strategy.

3) Kotler, P. (2009). Marketing management: A south Asian perspective. Pearson Education India.

4) Kotler, P. (2017). Customer value management. Journal of creating value, 3(2), 170-172.

5) Li Chongsen. (2014). Participate in the general trend of digital marketing. Manager, 1.

6) Li Ran. (2013). Beijing Hyundai Motor ix35 Digital Marketing Program Research (Master's thesis, Hebei University of Technology).

7) Li Xin. (2012). Digital marketing foresight, four major trends, five key words. Successful marketing, 12.

8) Liang Qian, Xie Hongyu, & Wang Ziqi. (2013). An Empirical Study of "Digital Marketing" Weibo Circles--Based on the Perspective of Social Network Analysis (Doctoral dissertation).

9) Ma Xiaoping. (2003). Digital Marketing: The Engine of Enterprise Soaring (Doctoral dissertation).

10) Ouyang Lan. (2012). An Analysis of Online Marketing Strategies of Tourism Companies——Based on the Comparison of Xiaomi Mobile Online Marketing. Tourism Overview (Industry Edition), 4, 75-76.

11) Saleh, K., Shukairy, A., Arte, A., de Converter, C., & em Clientes, P. (2010). Otimização de conversão. Arte e a Ciência e Converter Prospects em Clientes, São Paulo: Novatec

12) Shengliang. (2008). Integrated Brand Communication. Xiamen University Press.

13) Shu Yongping. (2010). Brand Communication Theory.

14) Wang Xinling. (2002). Brand management strategy. Economic Management Press.

15) Wu, J. (2020). Digital Marketing Business of Automobile 4S Stores-Research on Performance (Doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University).

16) Wu, J. (2020). Digital Marketing Business of Automobile 4S Stores-Research on Performance (Doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University).

17) Yu Mingyang, Zhu Jida, & Wu Mei. (2005). Public relations promotion of university brands. Public Relations World, April 20-21.

18) Zhang He. (2012). Digital marketing research of domestic management consulting companies (Master's thesis, Heilongjiang University).

19) Zhang Yahui. (2013). Prospects for the Digital Marketing Era: Integration and Segmentation-An Interview with Zhang Wei, President of Mantle Group. Advertising Grand View (Comprehensive Edition), 12.

20) Zhang Yingkui, & Wang Ying. (2004). The impact of digital marketing on enterprises and the conditions for their implementation. Information work, 1.

21) Zhou Yunqian, & Yang Na. (2014). Analysis on the Digital Marketing of American Dramas in the New Media Era. TV Research, 3.

22) Zhou Yunqian, & Yang Na. (2014). Analysis on the Digital Marketing of American Dramas in the New Media Era. TV Research, 3.

23) Zhu Jinhui. (2011). On the development strategy of the digital marketing platform for cultural products in Changsha. Hunan Social Sciences, 1, 142-144.