

Triggers and Marketing Strategies of Corporate Brand Crisis in the New Media Environment

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Abstract. Brand is the intangible asset of an enterprise. In the new media environment, the social market environment closely related to the survival of enterprises is more complex under the influence of many uncertain factors, which increases the probability of brand crisis. Only by using marketing strategies that are suitable for the new media era can enterprises turn crisis into opportunity. This paper mainly uses the literature research method and case analysis method, and on the basis of briefly expounding the characteristics of new media marketing, analyzes the various reasons for the outbreak of brand crisis in the new media environment, and puts forward new media marketing methods to deal with the brand crisis of enterprises, hoping to provide useful reference and suggestions for the long-term development of enterprise marketing and brand in the new media environment.

Keywords: Enterprise crisis, new media marketing, brand, brand management.

1. Introduction

New media refers to media forms that correspond to traditional media and are supported by emerging technologies. Traditional media mainly include radio, television, newspapers, etc., and the media form with low communication efficiency and one-way communication. The most fundamental difference between new media and traditional media is immediacy and interactivity. New media marketing is a marketing model that uses the characteristics of new media to carry out marketing activities. Enterprises can rely on new media to fully communicate and interact with consumers in real time, understand consumers' needs and expectations for products or services, and answer consumers' various doubts in a timely manner, so as to realize the active transmission and acquisition of information, constantly dynamically adjust marketing and publicity strategies, and finally achieve the purpose of showing a three-dimensional real corporate image and improving brand influence [1].

Brand refers to a name, symbol, logo or design, which is mainly used to identify the products or services sold by a company and distinguish it from competitors' products or services. Brand is a valuable intangible asset of an enterprise. As the marketing environment becomes more complex, the competition between enterprises has changed from the original product and service competition to brand marketing competition. In today's increasingly fierce market competition, individuals, enterprises and countries have begun to pay attention to the intangible asset of brands. For enterprises, brand is undoubtedly the main manifestation of their core competitiveness. For the sake of their own interests and long-term development, major enterprises have opened the prelude to brand marketing competition and brand in-depth construction.

Brand crisis refers to the quality and emotional crisis between an enterprise and consumers in the process of development due to external or internal factors, so that consumers no longer trust and consume the enterprise and its brand products, resulting in business difficulties or bankruptcy. The harm caused by the brand crisis may lead to a decrease in the benefits of the enterprise, and at worst, it may reduce the market share of the enterprise brand, which is not conducive to the sales and promotion of subsequent products or services, and may even lead to the demise of the brand. How to use marketing methods to avoid risks, resolve crises, and maintain a good image and brand reputation of enterprises is the main research topic of brand crisis communication and marketing communication [2].

2. Characteristics of New Media Marketing

After the emergence of new media, enterprises gradually strengthen their emphasis on new media marketing in the process of business development. With the update and iteration of information technology and the complex and unpredictable market environment, new media marketing presents different characteristics from the past.

2.1. Interactivity

Interactivity is the most significant feature that distinguishes new media marketing from traditional marketing methods. With the support of technology, new media makes up for the shortcomings and deficiencies of traditional media, marketers can help consumers classify information and avoid them from wasting too much time and energy on screening information, so that they can efficiently obtain the marketing information they want and valuable to themselves, so as to stimulate consumers' desire to buy products and subtly convert them into long-term customers. Therefore, in essence, the interactivity of new media marketing enhances the efficiency of information dissemination and improves the acceptance of information, thereby maximizing marketing effects [3].

2.2. Personalization

The technical attributes relied on by new media marketing are to mine, collect and analyze user data through algorithms, classify it according to user attributes, and accurately push marketing information after forming user portraits to meet the personalized needs of users to purchase products, which is conducive to improving the conversion rate and stickiness of users, so as to realize the further dissemination and diffusion of corporate brand value. Enterprises can reposition and classify consumer groups through data monitoring in the new media background, and formulate personalized marketing plans according to the different characteristics of the platforms they often log into, which is conducive to improving the market share of the brand and the accuracy of the company's market control.

2.3. Popularity

According to the latest report released by CNNIC, as of June 2023, the number of Chinese netizens has reached 1.079 billion, and the Internet penetration rate is 76.4%. Among them, the number of mobile phone Internet users has reached 1.076 billion, and mobile phones have become the primary terminal choice for netizens to access the Internet [4]. With the popularization of the Internet and mobile terminals, new media quickly entered the public eye at the beginning of its production, and new media marketing was quickly widely accepted and had a huge consumer audience. Enterprises can carry out integrated marketing communication according to the new media matrix in the online platform, and promote product information and brand concepts through multiple means and platforms, so that consumers can understand the basic situation of the brand in an all-round way, which is conducive to improving consumers' desire to buy and satisfying their purchasing psychology.

2.4. Diversification

The emergence of communication platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, micro-video and clients provides multiple channels for new media marketing, and text, pictures, videos, audio, etc. can become multiple carriers of new media marketing content. Enterprises can adopt different marketing forms according to the characteristics of different communication platforms, such as the micro-communication characteristics of Weibo, which means that the short, flat and fast video form can achieve unexpected brand marketing effects; The long reading feature of WeChat makes it a concentrated place for advertorial marketing, and the information service function of WeChat official account provides help for brand promotion and value development. Diversified marketing platforms and flexible marketing methods can not only enable consumers to quickly obtain rich information, but also expand brand marketing capacity. Therefore, new media marketing in the Internet era has

achieved a breakthrough in the traditional marketing model and marketing field, making the marketing of the commodity economy more innovative and attractive, and can also meet consumer needs to a greater extent [5].

3. The Reasons for the Formation of Corporate Brand Crisis in the New Media Environment

In the traditional environment, product quality or service problems often become the main cause of brand crisis, but in the new media environment, the formation of enterprise brand crisis is not only similar to the traditional environment, but also has different characteristics due to the different market environments. In the new media environment, the reasons for the formation of corporate brand crisis are diversified, which can be mainly divided into internal and external reasons.

3.1. Internal Reasons

3.1.1. Product quality and service issues

This problem refers to the quality and safety of products or their derivatives, which is one of the most common and main problems leading to the crisis of corporate brands. Brand is the soul of quality, and quality is the life of the brand. The outbreak of corporate brand crisis is mainly caused by the company's lax control of product quality and the harm to the interests of consumers after being put into the market. In the new media environment, information dissemination has the characteristics of fast speed, wide scope and great influence. If a certain type of brand has problems that infringe on consumer rights and interests such as product quality or poor service attitude, it is bound to cause dissatisfaction among many consumers once exposed on the Internet. The higher the brand awareness, the wider the sales target, the more the crisis events caused by the brand's product quality and service problems will attract the attention of the whole network, and the more intense the public opinion condemnation of the brand.

3.1.2. Brand concept and marketing strategy issues

Specifically, there is a conflict between the brand's value orientation and universal value at the national, ethnic and gender levels, which is reflected in its marketing strategy. The brand concept orientation comes from the original intention of the brand's creation, and the brand strategy serves the brand's market positioning and future long-term development. Brand concept is an important factor affecting consumer attention and purchasing behavior, and should fully abide by the value culture in the market after entering the market, fulfill corporate social responsibility, and formulate development strategies for brand positioning, brand use, and brand extension.

3.1.3. Internal management problems of enterprises

This problem is mainly manifested in the misbehavior of senior leaders, layoffs, and lack of awareness of the crisis among employees. In the context of new media, information dissemination channels such as Weibo, WeChat, and Douyin are diverse and complex, which can easily lead to brand crises. On the one hand, corporate executives or spokespersons symbolize the brand in the market, and their daily actions are directly related to brand recognition. If this part of the population affects the associated brand due to negative evaluations such as life style, words and deeds, it will bring negative evaluations to the brand after online fermentation. On the other hand, if corporate marketers lack crisis awareness after the crisis, and ignore the risks of marketing communication in the context of new media and respond passively, it will also have a negative impact on the corporate brand [6].

3.2. External Reasons

3.2.1. Network technology drives and media intervention

The popularity of the Internet provides conditions for the public to access the Internet, and the development of network information technology enables the general public to receive information anytime and anywhere, such as Weibo, WeChat and other social media provide a platform for netizens to express their opinions and emotions. The large number of netizens, the quality of information, and the emotion-driven network environment provide a petri dish for the brewing and outbreak of brand crises. If companies do not properly handle brand crisis events, they will have more destructive power and severity on the Internet than in the traditional media period. The media's involvement in the report of the brand crisis has also become an important factor in the spread of the brand crisis. Once the brand crisis is reported by the media, especially the mainstream media, it will undoubtedly arouse public attention and heated discussions, which is not conducive to the maintenance of corporate image.

3.2.2. Improper advertising and marketing

In the literal sense, advertising is one of the main means of communication, maintenance and construction of brand image for modern enterprises under the development of imaging technology. Companies inform consumers about their products through advertisements and establish connections between brands and consumers to help cultivate consumer loyalty and favorability. A good advertising strategy can quickly open up the market, and catchy advertising slogans can leave a deeper impression on consumers through viral communication, thereby helping the brand image to spread better. Improper advertising and marketing may damage the brand image of the enterprise and even affect the survival of the enterprise. For example, in 2021, a brand launched a video advertisement, which was on the front row of Weibo's "hot search" as soon as it was released, causing controversy and condemnation on the whole network because it belittled and vilified women as a means of publicity and marketing.

3.2.3. Competitor shock

With the continuous development of the market economy, the complexity of the marketing environment has made the competition between enterprise brands fierce, bringing great pressure to the survival and operation of enterprises. Whether it is the advanced technology of competitors, the cultivation of talents, the innovation of marketing methods, the improvement of product quality, or the malicious slander and crisis planning of competitors, it will bring damage to the brand value and reputation of the enterprise. For example, in recent years, emerging car brands have successfully attracted a large number of consumers who are tired of traditional car brands by emphasizing their environmental protection concepts, intelligent technology and excellent performance, bringing an unprecedented brand crisis to the latter [7].

4. Marketing Strategies to Deal with Corporate Brand Crises in the New Media Environment

Although the risks of crises are well known, crises often have a dual nature, that is, risks and opportunities coexist. For corporate brands, it is necessary to be aware of the many cyber risks faced by enterprise marketing in the new media environment, and establish corresponding crisis public relations and marketing mechanisms to help enterprises crisis into opportunity.

4.1. Respond to the Public in a Timely Manner and Take Responsibility

When a brand crisis comes, enterprises must respond as soon as possible. On the one hand, after the occurrence of a crisis event, enterprises should act quickly, seize the initiative, and actively contact the media and consumers, communicate with them sincerely, and control the situation within a certain range. On the other hand, enterprises should cooperate with the media to publicly and sincerely apologize to the public and consumers whose interests have been harmed, take the initiative to assume

all or part of the responsibility, and strive for public understanding to the greatest extent. In 2022, a milk tea brand suddenly appeared on the “black hot search” list because it was named by the Beijing Consumers Association for potential safety hazards in its food. After being criticized by the Beijing Consumers Association, the brand immediately apologized to the whole network on its Weibo, Douyin, Xiaohongshu and other new media platform accounts. Most people believed that the brand admitted its mistakes quickly and had a sincere attitude and the crisis event came to an end in the ridiculous comments of netizens [8].

4.2. Use Friendly Attitude to Maintain Communication

Emotional marketing and interactive marketing are a common public relations method used by enterprises after brand crisis events, that is, the use of emotion to impress consumers through the help of emotional packaging, emotional promotion, emotional design and other strategies, to arouse consumer resonance, and in the process of maintaining communication with the public, adhere to the principle of interactivity, understand consumer demands, and guide consumers to actively participate and share, so as to strengthen the close connection between brands and consumers, improve brand exposure and reputation.

4.3. Keep Up with Hot Events and Repair Brand Image

In the marketing case of classic crisis public relations, many corporate brands have a sensitive enough sense of information to grasp the current hot events of general public concern and newsworthiness, attract the attention of the media and consumers, and carry out targeted publicity and promotion, so as to improve brand awareness, reputation and positive image, and finally achieve the purpose of expanding product sales. In addition, enterprises can use the Internet to carry out brand marketing, constantly change the negative evaluation of consumers, and resolve the negative impact of the brand crisis on the enterprise. In recent years, enterprises have participated in more and more public welfare activities, the cost of charity activities is lower compared with millions of yuan of advertising expenses, and it can attract social attention and gain public support, which can not only gain public favor and reputation, but also repair the brand image and promote the spread of brand concepts and values, which is undoubtedly a good opportunity for corporate brand marketing [9].

4.4. Divert Public Attention and Pay Attention to the Function of Opinion Leaders

Opinion leaders are important nodes in information dissemination, and they are also two-way gatekeepers to achieve communication from top to bottom, inside and outside. On the one hand, after the occurrence of a brand crisis, they can use their professional knowledge and experience in a certain field to repair the brand image through word-of-mouth marketing such as bloggers planting grass or commenting, sending hot tweets, etc., and re-establish consumers’ trust in the brand, so as to alleviate the brand crisis. On the other hand, they can use their strong appeal on social media and in the industry to guide public opinion by publishing their own opinions, so that the public’s attention can be shifted from the brand crisis to other aspects [10].

5. Summary

The advent of the new media era has brought an impact on the development of corporate brands, and the corporate brand crisis is facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities. There are various factors that cause brand crises in enterprises, mainly divided into internal reasons such as product quality and service problems, brand concept and marketing strategy problems, and internal management problems of enterprises, as well as external reasons such as network technology driven by media intervention, improper advertising and marketing, and the impact of competitors. Traditional marketing strategies are not suitable for the current new media context, and it is necessary to grasp the impact of the new media era, not only to respond to the public in a timely manner, to take the initiative to assume responsibility, but also to combine the marketing strategy with the actual

situation of the enterprise and brand characteristics, use friendly attitude to communication, actively explore new media marketing strategies, pay attention to the function of opinion leaders, and explore the effectiveness of new media marketing supported by new technologies. Thus, it helps the corporate brand establish a good image, maintain stable development, and achieve the long-term goal of sustainable development.

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