A Research on Exhibition Marketing Strategies under the Era of "Internet Plus"

Liu Guoqing[a]

College of Foreign Studies, Guangdong University of Science and Technology, Dongguan, 523083, China
[a]517194568@qq.com

Abstract: Today, the era of "Internet Plus" has brought great overturns to exhibition marketing, e.g. the change of exhibition form, the improvement of audience participation, digital market insight, the trend of online and offline integration and the influence of social media. This paper mainly discusses the connotation of exhibition marketing, explores the current status and problems of online exhibition marketing, and finally proposes the optimization path of exhibition marketing strategies under the background of "Internet Plus".

1. Introduction

Since China put forward the "Internet Plus" action plan in 2015, the application of "Internet Plus" has reshaped the new form of a new generation of information technology, providing an important platform and opportunity for the transformation and upgrading of all walks of life [1]. The exhibition industry, as an emerging industry, should make effective use of the "Internet Plus" era to carry out online innovative marketing and combine network technology with enterprise exhibition marketing process, which can not only better promote the publicity effect of the enterprises [2], but also enhance the transformation of enterprise exhibition marketing mode from traditional mode (offline) to modern marketing mode (online and offline), thus boosting the in-depth development of exhibition marketing mode.

2. Connotation of Exhibition Marketing

Exhibition marketing refers to a marketing strategy that uses exhibitions as marketing tools to showcase the products, services, or brands to potential customers and target markets, in order to promote the sales, establish brand image, and expand business [3]. Simultaneously, exhibition marketing provides enterprises with face-to-face contact opportunities with target audiences through exhibition, display, interaction, and communication, deepening customer relationships, expanding market share, incubating and promoting new products, etc. Normally speaking, exhibition marketing often covers the following types.

The first type is industry exhibition. Enterprises get involved in relevant industry exhibitions, exhibit the latest products, technologies, and solutions, and communicate with potential customers,

industry experts, and partners. For example, automobile manufacturers participate in international automobile exhibitions to show the latest automobile technologies and new models, attracting the attention of consumers and dealers [4].

The second one is vocational exhibition. Enterprises participate in job fairs or vocational exhibitions, directly contact job seekers, introduce their company culture, job opportunities, and development prospects to attract talents to join. For instance, technology companies participate in university job fairs, promote their innovative projects and technology positions, and fascinate outstanding graduates [5].

The third one is international trade exhibition. Enterprises engage in international trade exhibitions, build up connections with overseas customers, showcase and promote their own products and services, and develop the international market. E.g., food companies take part in international food exhibitions, popularize their own specialty foods and beverages, and draw the attention of international buyers and distributors [6].

The fourth one is new product launch. Enterprises hold new product launches, inviting potential customers, media, and industry insiders to attend the launch event, showcasing the characteristics and advantages of new products, and conducting product demonstrations and consultations. For example, an electronics company runs a new mobile phone press conference, demonstrates the functions and design of the phone to the media and consumers, and accepts media interviews and user questions [7].

3. Current Status and Problems of Online Exhibition Marketing

The status of exhibition marketing mainly depends on many factors, including industry, market demand, technological development, and global situation. The current situation of online exhibition marketing mainly includes the following aspects.

3.1 Virtual Exhibitions

With the development of the Internet and virtual reality technology, virtual exhibitions have become a mainstream trend. Enterprises create virtual exhibition halls through online exhibition platforms, showcase products and services, and attract visitors for interaction and consultation. Besides, virtual exhibitions provide opportunities for participation across regions and borders, expanding the scope of audiences and exhibitors.

3.2 Online Interaction and Live Streaming

Online exhibition marketing enhances the interaction between viewers and exhibitors. Through online live streaming, video conferencing, and other forms, viewers can engage in real-time interactive communication with exhibitors, ask questions, and receive instant responses. In addition, some online exhibitions also offer interactive booths, online Q&A (Question & Answer), and discussion sections to further promote interaction and communication.

3.3 Data Analysis and Personalized Recommendation

Online exhibitions can provide customized content and recommendations based on audience behavior and interests through data analysis and personalized recommendation algorithms. By observing audience browsing behavior, participation in activities, and interest tags, online exhibitions can better understand audience needs and provide more personalized and targeted displays and recommendations.

3.4 Social Media and Online Communication

Social media plays an important role in online exhibition marketing. Exhibitors and visitors can share exhibition content, publish real-time updates, and engage in online interaction and communication through social media platforms. Through the power of social media communication, exhibitors can expand the exposure of exhibitions and attract more viewers to participate.

3.5 Online Business Negotiations and Transactions

Online exhibitions provide exhibitors with a platform for online business negotiations and transactions. Visitors can directly learn about product information, communicate and negotiate with exhibitors, and place orders and purchases through the online exhibition platform. The convenience and efficiency of this online trading method have brought more business opportunities to exhibitors and customers.

Generally speaking, the main features of current online exhibition marketing include virtual exhibitions, online interaction and live streaming, data analysis and personalized recommendations, social media and online communication, as well as online business negotiations and transactions. These characteristics provide exhibitors and visitors with a more flexible, convenient and personalized way of participation, and promote the digital transformation of the exhibition industry. However, under the context of "Internet Plus", there are still serious problems existed in the exhibition marketing of many enterprises in China, as the following show.

First, technology application is inadequate. Although the concept of "Internet Plus" has been proposed for many years, the implementation of technology application in the exhibition industry is still relatively lagging behind. Many exhibitions still adopt traditional exhibition methods, lacking applications of digitization, intelligence, and virtualization, and unable to fully utilize the Internet and technological innovation to enhance exhibition experience and expand the market.

Second, there is lack of online and offline integration. Traditional exhibitions are mainly offline. In the era of "Internet Plus", online and offline integration has become a trend. However, there are still challenges in the online and offline integration of China's exhibition industry, as seamless connectivity and interoperability have not been achieved.

Third, interactive experience among participants is insufficient. Traditional exhibitions chiefly focus on on-the-spot viewing, and the interactive experience of participants is limited. In the context of "Internet Plus", more attention should be paid to the interaction and experience of participants, such as through virtual reality, augmented reality, interactive booths and other technical means to enhance participants' sense of participation and memory.

Fourth, data utilization is deficient. The application of internet technology has brought a large amount of data, but currently, the collection and application of these data in the exhibition marketing process is not sufficient. Data analysis and operational capabilities are relatively weak, and data cannot be fully utilized to optimize exhibition planning, exhibitor selection, and understanding of audience needs.

Fifth, there exist security and privacy issues. In the era of "Internet Plus", exhibition activities increasingly rely on the network environment, but network security and privacy issues also increase accordingly. In exhibition marketing, how to protect the data security of enterprises and individuals, and prevent network attacks and Data breach are still a challenge.

In general, though the exhibition industry faces some problems in the context of "Internet Plus", it also provides many opportunities. By strengthening technological applications, integrating online and offline, enhancing participant experiences, and utilizing data, efforts can be made to promote the development of the exhibition industry in the digital era.

4. Optimization Path of Exhibition Marketing Strategies under the Background of "Internet Plus"

Under the background of "Internet Plus", there are several paths to optimize the exhibition marketing strategies.

4.1 Digital Transformation

Enterprises need to turn the traditional exhibition mode into a digital platform mode, and make full use of Internet technology and online exhibition platform. By creating virtual exhibition halls, online displays, and interactions, enterprises are able to expand the scope of exhibitors and visitors, enrich exhibition content, and enhance the interactive experience of participants [8].

4.2 Data-driven Marketing

Enterprises should fully utilize internet technology to collect and analyze data, understand the behavior and needs of visitors and exhibitors. Through data analysis, enterprises can be in a position to optimize exhibition planning, adjust display content and event arrangements, and improve the effectiveness and attractiveness of exhibition activities.

4.3 Online and Offline Integration

Enterprises ought to build a comprehensive exhibition platform through online and offline integration. Applying internet technology to organically combine offline exhibitions with online platforms, and achieving seamless switching and interactive participation among audiences, which are crucial for exhibition marketing strategies of the enterprise. At the same time, as holding physical exhibitions, real-time live streaming, interactive communication, online forums and other activities are provided online to enlarge the audience's scope, increase participation and market influence.

4.4 Social Media Integration

Utilizing social media platforms to enhance interaction and communication with audiences and exhibitors is vital. By publishing exhibition information, interactive discussions, and online Q&A, enterprises can increase their exposure and participation with the audience. Moreover, from the perspective of the enterprises themselves, drawing upon the influence and dissemination of social media is also beneficial to enhance the visibility and exposure of their exhibition activities.

4.5 Innovative Experience Design

Providing innovative display and interactive experience with the help of Internet technology and digital tools is significant for exhibition marketing strategies. Enterprises can take advantage of different kinds of technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and interactive exhibition booths to enhance visitors' sense of participation and memory. By means of innovative display forms and fun interactive activities, attract and retain audiences, strengthen brand image and market influence.

In general, in the context of "Internet Plus", the optimization path of exhibition marketing strategy is digital transformation, data-driven marketing, online and offline integration, social media integration and innovative Experience design. Through efforts in these areas, the effectiveness, participation, and brand influence of exhibitions can be improved to meet the needs of audiences

and exhibitors in this new era.

5. Conclusion

In summary, online exhibition marketing has the importance of global reach, cost reduction, personalization and participation, data insight and optimization, as well as flexibility and convenience. In the digital era, fully utilizing the advantages of online exhibitions can expand the market, enhance brand influence, and achieve marketing goals and business growth. "Internet Plus" is an essential direction for the development of many industries in the future. Exhibition marketing, as an important emerging industry in the service industry, should seize the important opportunity of "Internet Plus" to develop its businesses reasonably and rapidly.

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