

## A Review of Research on Entrepreneur Front-end Behavior

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**Abstract:** This paper reviews the research status of entrepreneurs' front-end behavior. First of all, this paper introduced the conceptual source of the entrepreneur's front-end behavior. Secondly, it summarized the classification of entrepreneurs' front-end behaviors by existing research, and introduced the research status of different types of entrepreneurs' front-end behaviors. Finally, the research direction of entrepreneurs' front-end behavior is prospected, in order to provide scholars and business managers with reference.

### 1. Introduction

With the changing competitive environment, the role and scope of entrepreneurs are becoming wider and more complex [1]. They are no longer limited to the management work behind the scenes, but frequently enter the public eye and participate in some front-end behaviors [2]. In recent years, the exposure of entrepreneurs in newspapers, magazines, television and other media has increased significantly [3]. Exposure to the public and self-presentation seems to have become an important part of every entrepreneur's work content [4]. Since entrepreneurs are often seen as representatives and symbols of corporate brands [5], if consumers have a good impression of entrepreneurs, they will also have a good impression on the brands that entrepreneurs operate [6]. How to effectively implement the front-end behavior to obtain positive evaluation of consumers and positively influence brand performance is a marketing practice problem that entrepreneurs urgently need to solve, and the existing theory research on this aspect is relatively sporadic. In the past, most of the research on entrepreneurs began from an internal perspective to explore how entrepreneurs as leaders, managers, and operators affect their employees and influence their performance (ie, background behavior). Nowadays, with the increase of entrepreneurs' external activities and media exposure, scholars have begun to pay attention to the direct influence of entrepreneurs' front-end behavior on external groups such as consumers and investors [7] [8]. These limited researches have laid a good foundation for us to further explore the entrepreneur front-end behavior. This paper intends to systematically sort out related research in this field, and provide reference for the in-depth study of the entrepreneur front-end behavior.

### 2. The concept of entrepreneur front-end behavior

The front-end behavior was first proposed by sociologist Erving Goffman in his book. He believes that human behavior is divided into front and back, and he believes that people behave differently in different situations. The book mainly explains how people perform "performance" in their daily life. The front-end behavior refers to the behavior that they display in front of the public. It is a way for a person to behave in front of the public. The purpose is to interact with other people [9]. Sunny Consolvo studied the theory of drama proposed by Erving Goffman, arguing that a person's performance before and after a person is different, and that people's expectations for their behavior before and after are different, and the theory of goal setting is used to explain the front-end behavior [10]. Entrepreneurial front-end behavior can be divided into active front-end and passive front-end. Active front-end behavior refers to the voluntary behavior of entrepreneurs to the public

and consumers. It is a way for entrepreneurs to interact with consumers. Passive front-end behavior refers to the background behavior of the media, the public, etc., who break into the entrepreneur's behavior, and expose the entrepreneur's behavior in the passive situation of entrepreneurs [9]. Entrepreneur front-end behavior is a kind of front-end behavior carried out by entrepreneurs. It refers to a kind of selective display behavior of entrepreneurs. It is an interactive behavior between entrepreneurs and the public that the public is expected to see and derive specific meaning from them. And this behavior can effectively influence consumers' brand attitudes and brand choices.

### **3. Types of entrepreneur front-end behavior**

#### **3.1 Entrepreneur's advertising endorsement behavior**

The types of advertising spokespersons include celebrities, entrepreneurs, experts, and typical consumers [11]. By comparing the endorsements of movie stars, typical consumers, experts, and CEOs as spokespersons: Compared with other types of spokespersons, with CEO as the advertising spokesperson, consumers have higher purchasing intentions for products and higher evaluation of advertising. At the same time, the trust evaluation of entrepreneurial spokespersons is also higher. And the type of spokesperson has no effect on the expected price and perceived quality of the product [12] [13]. The reason for this is that the credibility of the spokesperson can influence the credibility of the brand, which in turn affects the brand equity of the endorsement brand [14]. The use of entrepreneurs as spokespersons has boundary conditions: First, the credibility of entrepreneurs themselves. Only when the CEO is considered to be credible can it appear as an advocate in the advertisement. Under certain conditions, the emergence of a CEO may distract the overall goal of advertising [15]. Second, the product category of endorsement. Compared with other types of spokespersons, entrepreneurs endorse technical or complex products better, and the effect of endorsing non-technical products is not significantly different from other spokespersons [13].

#### **3.2 Entrepreneur's charity behavior**

At present, there are few studies on entrepreneur's charity behavior and social responsibility behavior, and related researches mainly discuss from two perspectives: entrepreneur perspective and consumer perspective. Research on entrepreneurs has found that entrepreneurs generally agree that "an excellent entrepreneur must have a strong sense of social responsibility" [16]. Entrepreneur's three responsibility orientations of law, ethics and charity positively affect corporate social responsibility performance and brand performance, while entrepreneurs' economic responsibility orientation negatively affects corporate social responsibility performance and brand performance [17]. The research conclusions of Chinese private entrepreneurs show that private entrepreneurs' perception of social responsibility has nothing to do with corporate brand performance in the short term, but it has a great relationship with brand long-term performance [18]. Research on entrepreneur charity behavior from the perspective of consumer perception: The charity behavior of entrepreneur will influence consumers' choice of their endorsement brands [19]. When the CEO publicly issues the CSR statement, the appropriate communication strategy can obtain the consumer's reasonable perception of the corporate brand [20].

#### **3.3 Entrepreneur's self-media behavior**

With the popularity of social media such as Weibo, the wide participation of entrepreneurs has attracted the attention of scholars. Entrepreneur publishing information on public platforms such as Weibo and blogs, and such behaviors of spontaneous dissemination are called self-media behaviors. Huang Jing et al. (2014) found that the microblogs related to "being a person" by entrepreneurs are more likely to attract praise from consumers than those related to "doing things" [21]. Xie Qinghong (2013) pointed out in his research that the emotional expression of entrepreneur Weibo also has an important impact on corporate brand image [22]. He Qiang (2012) found that excessive marketing of brand and product marketing information by entrepreneurs will trigger consumer resentment and reduce purchase intention [23]. At present, the research on entrepreneurs' self-media behavior mainly

focuses on the microblog behavior of entrepreneurs, and there are few studies on other self-media behaviors such as WeChat.

### **3.4 Entrepreneurs' negative behavior exposure**

Exposure of negative behaviors of entrepreneurs is a kind of behavior that is brought to the fore. The exposure of the public and the media to the negative behavior of entrepreneurs (being forwarded) is increasing. Different types of negative behavior can have a negative impact on entrepreneurs and their corporate brands. Huang jing (2011) divided the exposure of entrepreneurs' negative behaviors into unemotional behaviors and illegal behaviors, and proved that unemotional behaviors had a greater negative impact on enterprises according to the characteristics of Chinese consumers [24]. When the negative behavior of entrepreneurs is exposed to the public relations crisis, if the crisis is not serious, the entrepreneurs of the baby face will feel more cordial and trustworthy than the mature face, but when the crisis is more serious, the difference will disappear [25].

## **4. Research prospect of entrepreneurs' front-end behavior**

In summary, the research on the entrepreneur's front-end behavior has received special attention from scholars, and has achieved certain research results. However, from the literature review, the research in this field is still in its infancy, and the research methods are relatively simple. The existing research explores entrepreneurial endorsements, charity, self-media, negative exposure, etc., but there are still many things that are not related like books, TV shows, etc., and more new media types will emerge with the development of social media. The current research methods mainly focus on the methods of literature research and simulation scenario experiments. In the future, big data can be used to explore the problems. In the real situation that entrepreneurs are very common in the front, it is of great practical significance to study the entrepreneurs' trust in consumers and promote brand performance.

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