

The Rise and Application Strategies of Virtual Idol in Brand Marketing

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to explore the reasons for the rise of virtual idols in brand marketing and their application strategies. Through detailed analysis, this article understands that virtual idols, as a new brand marketing method, are playing an increasingly important role in the modern market environment. The research uses case analysis and other methods to systematically sort out the development process of virtual idols, the comparison with traditional idols, and its specific application strategies in brand marketing. The research results show that the rise of virtual idols benefits from the progress of science and technology and the changes of consumers' aesthetics. Their unique visual impact, diverse forms of expression and strong interactive ability enable them to quickly attract consumers' attention and establish deep emotional ties with them. In brand marketing, the application strategies of virtual idols include selecting suitable virtual idols according to brand positioning, formulating integrated marketing strategies to enhance brand awareness and user participation, and enhancing interaction with fans through social media platforms. Enterprises should actively embrace this change, skillfully use virtual idols to enhance brand value and enhance consumer appeal, so as to stand out in the fierce market competition.

1. Introduction

In today's competitive market environment, brand marketing has become an important means for enterprises to gain competitive advantage [1]. Brand marketing is not only to enhance the popularity of products, but also to create a unique brand image, thus establishing a deep emotional connection with consumers [2]. With the progress of science and technology and the change of consumers' aesthetics, the traditional brand marketing methods gradually appear monotonous and lack of new ideas [3]. It is in this context that virtual idols, as a new marketing tool, came into being. With its unique charm and unlimited creative space, they quickly occupied a place in the field of brand marketing [4].

The purpose of this study is to explore the reasons for the rise of virtual idols in brand marketing and their application strategies. Specifically, this article will analyze why virtual idols can become the new favorite of brand marketing, and how enterprises should skillfully use virtual idols to enhance brand awareness and attractiveness. Through this study, I hope to provide useful reference and enlightenment for brand marketers.

2. The rise of virtual idol and its influence

The development of virtual idols can be described as a blending history of technology and art. Early virtual idols were mostly animated images, such as Japanese Hatsune Miku, which attracted a large number of fans through their cute images and unique sound library [5-6]. With the progress of science and technology, modern virtual idols have developed into highly realistic 3D models, such as Tianyi Luo in China and Kizuna AI in Japan. They not only have realistic appearance and movements, but also can interact and perform in real time through artificial intelligence technology, which greatly enriches the form and connotation of brand marketing.

Compared with traditional idols, virtual idols have unique advantages in brand image building: virtual idols are not limited by time, place and physical condition, and can perform and interact anytime and anywhere [7]. The image and personality of virtual idols can be customized according

to brand needs, which is more in line with brand positioning and values. As a digital asset, virtual idols have a longer life cycle and lower maintenance costs.

Virtual idols have a significant influence in brand marketing [8]. For example, a well-known beverage brand has successfully improved its brand image and sales by cooperating with virtual idols. The virtual idol interacts with fans through social media, offline activities and other channels, which not only enhances the brand's popularity, but also attracts the attention of a large number of young consumers. In addition, virtual idols can also help brands convey values and ideas and establish deeper ties with consumers. These successful cases show that virtual idols play an irreplaceable role in brand marketing.

3. Application strategy of virtual idol in brand marketing

(1) Brand positioning and virtual idol selection

Brand positioning is the core of enterprise marketing strategy, which determines the unique position and image of the brand in the market [9]. When choosing virtual idols for brand marketing, enterprises must first make clear their own brand positioning, and choose virtual idols that match the brand image according to the preferences and needs of the target audience, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Case analysis of brand positioning and virtual idol selection

Brand name	Brand positioning	Target audience characteristics	Characteristics of selected virtual idols	Marketing effect evaluation
Brand A	Young, fashionable and avant-garde	Young people, pursuing trends and individuality	A virtual idol full of energy and creativity	Successfully attracted the attention of the target audience and enhanced the brand image and popularity
Brand B	High-end, luxury and quality	High-end consumers, pursuing quality life	Noble and elegant virtual idol	Strengthened the brand's high-end image and increased consumers' trust in quality
Brand C	Health, nature and ecology	Consumers who pay attention to healthy life	Virtual idols related to nature and environmental protection	Effectively conveyed the brand's healthy and natural concept and attracted the corresponding consumer groups

Table 1 lists the positioning of different brands, the characteristics of target audience and the characteristics of selected virtual idols to show how brand positioning affects enterprises to choose appropriate virtual idols in brand marketing. At the same time, the table also contains a simple evaluation of marketing effect to reflect the positive impact of choosing the right virtual idol on brand marketing. Enterprises can make more informed decisions on the choice of virtual idols according to their own brand positioning and target audience.

When choosing virtual idols, enterprises should also consider their audience coverage, influence and fit with cooperative brands. A popular virtual idol can bring more exposure opportunities and enhance the brand's popularity and goodwill. At the same time, the image and values of virtual idols should be consistent with the brand concept to ensure the consistency and effectiveness of marketing activities.

(2) Integrated marketing strategy

In order to maximize the effect of virtual idols in brand marketing, enterprises should formulate integrated marketing strategies and combine online and offline activities to form an all-round marketing offensive. Online activities can include social media challenges related to virtual idols, live interaction, online games, etc. to attract the participation of young audiences and enhance brand exposure. Offline activities can let consumers feel the charm of virtual idols at close range and enhance their emotional connection with brands by holding theme exhibitions, meetings and pop-up shop. Enterprises can also consider cross-border cooperation with virtual idols, such as launching joint products, creating theme songs or MVs, etc., in order to expand the brand audience and

enhance the brand influence.

(3) Interaction between social media and fans

In the digital age, social media has become an important position of brand marketing. Through social media platform, enterprises can publish the related trends of virtual idols in real time, interact with fans and collect feedback and suggestions from consumers. In order to enhance the interaction between virtual idols and fans, enterprises can hold regular activities such as questions and answers, voting and lottery, and encourage fans to actively participate in and share their opinions and ideas. At the same time, enterprises can also make full use of the communication advantages of social media to show the charm and brand characteristics of virtual idols through short videos, live broadcasts and other forms to attract more potential consumers' attention. Through the interaction and communication with fans, enterprises can continuously expand the influence of brands and enhance consumers' cognition and loyalty to brands.

4. Case analysis and practical suggestions

4.1. Successful case analysis

In order to deeply understand the successful application of virtual idols in brand marketing, this section selects some typical cases for analysis, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Successful cases of virtual idols in brand marketing

cooperative brand	Virtual Idol Name	Marketing activity details	Marketing effect and data analysis
XX cosmetic brand	Pleasant and romantic dream	1. Launch the limited edition makeup series of Yee Meng joint name, including eye shadow tray, lipstick and so on. 2. Launch a "Dancing with Qimeng" makeup challenge on platforms such as Weibo and Tik Tok, and invite fans to imitate Qimeng's makeup and share it.	1. During the event, the number of official Weibo fans of the brand increased by 30%. 2. The topic of "Dancing with Fantasy" has been read more than 100 million times and discussed 500,000 times. 3. Qimeng co-branded limited edition products were sold out within 24 hours after the launch, and the sales volume increased by 40% compared with the same period of last year.
XX sneaker brand	Windrunner	1. Launch Windrunner co-branded sports shoes, emphasizing the combination of sports and fashion. 2. Run with Windrunner online and offline to encourage consumers to share running data and experiences.	1. During the activity, the online sales of XX sports shoes brand increased by 60%. 2. "Run with Windrunner" attracted more than 100,000 participants, and related social media topics were read more than 50 million times. 3. The sales volume of Windrunner co-branded sports shoes exceeded the expected target by 200% within one month after its release.

The case shows that choosing suitable virtual idols for cooperation and combining with creative marketing activities can significantly enhance brand awareness and sales. Through case analysis, we can sum up some successful experiences, such as accurately positioning the target audience, choosing the right virtual idol, designing creative marketing activities and making full use of the communication power of social media.

Although virtual idols have obvious advantages and potential in brand marketing, they may also face some challenges and problems in the actual application process. For example, the image and reputation management of virtual idols needs extra care to avoid damaging the brand image due to improper words and deeds. In addition, the cost of cooperation with virtual idols may be high, and the cooperation effect is difficult to evaluate quantitatively. Therefore, enterprises need to fully consider these factors and formulate corresponding risk control strategies when using virtual idols for brand marketing.

4.2. Practical suggestions

Based on case analysis and market research, this article provides the following specific suggestions for enterprises to use virtual idols for brand marketing: clear brand positioning and target audience, and choose appropriate virtual idols for cooperation; Formulate integrated marketing strategies to enhance brand awareness and user participation by combining online and offline activities; Make full use of social media platforms to interact with fans, expand brand influence and collect consumer feedback. At the same time, enterprises should also pay attention to market dynamics and changes in consumer demand, and adjust marketing strategies in time to adapt to the changing market environment.

5. Conclusions

Through the in-depth analysis of the application of virtual idols in brand marketing, this study draws the following research results and conclusions:

Results: Virtual idols have become the new favorite of brand marketing because of their unique image and strong interactive ability. Its development process shows the transformation from simple cartoon image to highly realistic 3D model, which reflects the profound influence of technological progress on brand marketing means. Compared with traditional idols, virtual idols show higher flexibility and customization, which enables brands to create an ideal spokesperson image according to their own needs. In addition, virtual idols are not limited by time, place and physical condition, which provides more possibilities for brand marketing. Through the analysis of several successful cases, this study found that virtual idols have significant effects in enhancing brand awareness, enhancing consumer appeal and transmitting brand values. These cases also reveal how virtual idols affect consumers' behavior and thus promote sales growth.

Conclusion: Virtual idol has irreplaceable advantages in brand marketing, and its unique image and strong interactive ability make it an important tool for modern brand marketing. When using virtual idols for brand marketing, enterprises should choose appropriate virtual idols according to brand positioning and target audience, and formulate integrated marketing strategies to maximize marketing effects.

With the continuous progress of technology and the change of consumer demand, the application of virtual idols in brand marketing will be more extensive and in-depth. Enterprises should keep up with this trend and constantly innovate brand marketing methods to adapt to the increasingly fierce market competition.

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