

Enhancing Brand Authenticity through Strategic Promotions in a Chinese Online Marketing Firm



Wang Gang¹, Lorenzo C. Lorenzo²

^{1,2}Graduate School, Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila, Philippines

ABSTRACT: This study analyzes brand authenticity and strategic promotions utilized by an internet marketing agency in China, emphasizing consumer perceptions, demographic factors, and promotional efficacy. As for correlation analysis, the data suggest that even though trade promotions play some role in motivating consumers, the brand authenticity views share the resultant majority. Interestingly, the high-powered digital marketing campaign yielded a negative correlation with two variables: transparency and the congruence of a consumer and product image; hence, a study may argue the importance of regulating promotional intensity and promoting authentic brands. Conversely, digital marketing, social media interaction, influencer marketing, and price tactics positively influence perceived value and brand engagement, hence strengthening their role in cultivating customer trust and loyalty. The study advocates for the enhancement of brand messaging, the refinement of pricing models, the optimization of mobile engagement, and the improvement of influencer marketing credibility to fortify brand positioning and consumer trust. By employing these tactics, the corporation can augment authenticity, enhance promotional efficacy, and sustain long-term market competitiveness.

KEYWORDS: Brand Authenticity, Strategic Promotions, Online Marketing Firm, China

INTRODUCTION

Customer behavior toward digital shopping has changed along with developments in social media as digital development has progressed. Recent research argues for a change from traditional promotion strategies to more realistic exhaustive promotion strategies including digital marketing, social media engagement, influencer marketing, content marketing, and strategic pricing to fit changing consumer behavior (Constantinescu, Constantin, & Belgiu, 2017; Hartono et al., 2020). Particularly in developing countries, more businesses are also looking to affordable communication channels for their brands with internet penetration and digital shifting in terms of exposure, engagement, and consequently profitability-wise (Pokhylko, Yeremenko, & Tychenko, 2023).

Most studies focus on the idea of digital marketing to acquisition or altering consumer attitudes toward brand loyalty and maybe the purchase (Cao et al., 2021). For example, influencer marketing works exceptionally well in the fashion and beauty industry, where social media personality highly contributes to the purchasing decisions of consumers on such platforms as Instagram and TikTok (Angraini, 2023; Maulana et al., 2023). Moreover, it has been shown that relevant narrative content marketing aligned with consumer values can strengthen brand authenticity and customer trust, serving as a potent instrument for customer relationship management (Prudnikov, Nazarenko, & Nazarenko, 2021). While enough literature has documented these promotional strategies across various sectors, the need remains to study the extent to which they can be integrated and jointly effective within specific business contexts to fill gaps in the literature on holistic-promotional strategies.

This study is centered on China in the past few years when digital transformation has picked up speed, leading to quick increasing online shopping and social media involvement. Start-ups and small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) in China are increasingly opting for digital gateways to compete in an ever-changing marketplace. Such a change mirrors a trend that cuts across industries where businesses are increasingly using online platforms to reach more/many customers in a short time, and of course, this observation is evident in studies that emphasize the emerging economies' digital marketing landscape (Sudrajat & Meiryani, 2018; Liu, 2024).

The idea research emanates from an interest to the researcher in the ways through which such promotional strategies can be utilized for businesses to be competitive in the digital age. The phenomenal growth of platforms such as TikTok and Instagram in the country with a global shift to e-commerce creates dire urgency for businesses to adopt integrated promotion strategies compared to traditional advertising (Maulana et al., 2023; Rajasekar & Aithal, 2022).

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Research Question

Is there a significant correlation between assessment of the respondents on the level of brand authenticity and strategic promotions employed by the Online Marketing Firm in China?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of the present study is to investigate the relationship between brand authenticity and the effectiveness of promotional strategies for an online marketing firm in China. The research adopted a quantitative design to ensure that the outcome of the study would be objective and statistically valid. The study tool 250 employees. They were selected on the basis of the direct involvement in brand management, consumer engagement, or promotional strategy implementation. The respondents were employees involved in various roles in the marketing, social media, and data analytics departments. The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire meant to capture the perceptions of employees regarding brand authenticity and promotional strategy effectiveness. The rating scale used was straightforward to enable easy interpretation of data, thus encouraging participants to indicate on a Likert-type scale their level of agreement with respect to each statement. The results were expected to provide insights in measurable forms that would guide future branding and promotional strategies in the online marketing sector.

Table 1. Correlation between Assessment of the Respondents on the Level of Brand Authenticity and Strategic Promotions Employed by the Online Marketing Firm in China

Brand Authenticity	Statistical Treatment	Strategic Promotions in terms of Digital Marketing	Strategic Promotions in terms of Social Media Engagement	Strategic Promotions in terms of Influencer Marketing	Strategic Promotions in terms of Content Marketing	Strategic Promotions in terms of Pricing Strategies
Heritage and Tradition	Pearson Correlation	-.001	.012	-.022	.105	.121
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.985	.853	.730	.097	.055
	Decision	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted
	Interpretation	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Transparency	Pearson Correlation	-.189**	.025	.006	.066	.039
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.698	.928	.297	.537
	Decision	Rejected	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted
	Interpretation	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Consumer-Brand Congruence	Pearson Correlation	-.164**	-.025	-.121	-.013	.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.690	.056	.833	.643
	Decision	Rejected	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted
	Interpretation	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Brand Experience	Pearson Correlation	-.029	-.081	-.027	-.110	-.057
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.645	.203	.675	.084	.368

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	Decision	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted
	Interpretation	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Perceived Value	Pearson Correlation	.163**	.151*	.274**	.057	.285**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.017	.000	.373	.000
	Decision	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected	Accepted	Rejected
	Interpretation	Significant	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Brand Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.211**	.195**	-.005	-.136*	-.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.002	.942	.032	.988
	Decision	Rejected	Rejected	Accepted	Rejected	Accepted
	Interpretation	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant	Not Significant
Overall Level of Brand Authenticity and Strategic Promotions	Pearson Correlation	.074				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.245				
	Decision	Accepted				
	Interpretation	Not Significant				

The correlation study between brand authenticity and strategic promotions used by the online marketing company in China shows varied results, with some notable correlations noted in some aspects and others remaining statistically insignificant. The results imply that although strategic promotional activities affect some elements of brand authenticity, the general correlation between brand authenticity and strategic promotions is not significant ($r = .074$, $p = .245$).

There were no appreciable relationships between the dimension of brand authenticity based on heritage and tradition and any of the used strategic promotions. All p-values were above 0.05, hence the null hypothesis was accepted; the Pearson correlation coefficients varied from $-.322$ to $.121$. This implies that brand views connected to heritage and tradition are independent of digital marketing, social media interaction, influencer marketing, content marketing, and pricing policies. Customers might connect legacy and tradition with long-term brand identification and history instead than transient marketing campaigns.

Transparency-wise, digital marketing shows a notable negative connection ($r = -.189$, $p = .003$), implying that perceived transparency falls as attempts at digital marketing grow. This might mean that too commercialized or aggressive digital marketing campaigns could occasionally be seen as unduly commercialized, which would cause doubt regarding the openness and honesty of the business. Transparency and social media engagement, influencer marketing, content marketing, or pricing techniques—all of which have no clear correlation—indicate, however, that these promotional strategies have little bearing on opinions of brand transparency.

Consumer-brand congruence and digital marketing showed a notable negative connection ($r = -.164$, $p = .009$), implying that more efforts in digital marketing could cause customers to feel less in line with their values and the brand's identity. This could result from too generic or impersonal digital advertisements devoid of a significant human connection. Other strategic promotions, including social media involvement, influencer marketing, content marketing, and price tactics, did not demonstrate notable associations with consumer-brand congruence, suggesting that these factors may not directly effect how well customers relate to the brand.

No appreciable relationships were discovered between any strategic campaign and brand authenticity for brand experience ($p > .05$ for all measures). This implies that rather than promotional activities, direct contacts with the brand—that is, customer service, and product quality, and brand consistency—shape brand experience.

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One found a closer link between numerous promotional tactics and perceived value. Perceived value and digital marketing ($r = .163, p = .010$), social media engagement ($r = .151, p = .000$), influencer marketing ($r = .274, p = .000$), pricing strategies ($r = .285, p = .000$) showed notably strong positive relationships between. These results imply that consumer impressions of the value proposition of a brand directly improve by means of digital promotions, influencer endorsements, and deliberate pricing. Though content tactics may influence customers, they may not directly affect their evaluation of value, so no notable correlation was identified between perceived value and content marketing.

Comparably, brand interaction showed notable relationships with several strategic initiatives. Brand engagement and digital marketing ($r = .211, p = .001$) had positive relationships; social media engagement ($r = .195, p = .002$), content marketing ($r = -.136, p = .032$), and so on. This implies that increasing consumer interaction with the brand depends much on digital marketing and social media. The negative association between brand engagement and content marketing, however, would suggest that although content marketing tells consumers, it does not always result in active involvement. Brand engagement and influencer marketing or pricing techniques showed no appreciable link, implying that these strategies do not inevitably generate more consumer involvement with the brand.

The general association between brand authenticity and strategic marketing was found to be not significant ($r = .074, p = .245$), albeit some notable relationships in several categories. This implies that whereas marketing campaigns could improve some facets of brand authenticity—such as perceived value and interaction—they have little impact on general brand authenticity impressions.

The results underline that pricing policies and digital marketing call for careful balance since too aggressive marketing efforts often compromise consumer-brand alignment and transparency. Influencer marketing and social media interaction, on the other hand, help to increase perceived value and brand interaction, therefore improving their usefulness as means of enhancing customer relationships.

Based on the data, the brand is recommended to concentrate on developing unique and meaningful digital experiences instead of depending just on marketing techniques if it is to improve authenticity. Thus, may keep a great sense of authenticity by matching marketing activities with real brand values and making sure that messaging speaks to target consumers, thereby optimizing the use of promotional techniques.

CONCLUSION

No significant overall correlation between brand authenticity and strategic promotions, indicating that while promotions contribute to engagement, they do not strongly determine authenticity perceptions. Digital marketing and transparency as well as consumer-brand congruence have a negative correlation which indicates that aggressive marketing efforts actually reduce trust and the personal connection with the brand. Perceived value positively correlates with digital marketing, social media engagement, influencer marketing, and pricing strategies; thus, these are proving beneficial in enhancing consumer perception of the brand's worth. Brand engagement is positively impacted by digital marketing and social media engagement. Thus, companies should emphasize interactive and visually appealing content to build customer relationships. Brand authenticity is an ongoing process, and the company should engage content marketing and social media engagement, which will help facilitate its branding while improving pricing strategies in line with consumer expectation. Digital marketing should be handled such that it builds trust and not compromise on transparency. A good balance should be ensured to adopt a consumer-centric organization, which will enhance the brand market positioning through strengthening of consumer relationships and long-term credibility and loyalty.

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