

Marketing Strategy of an Original Chinese Women's Clothing Brand SNBL

Wei Chen, Wanmin Ni*

College of Cross-border E-Commerce, College of Science and Technology, Zhejiang International Studies University, Hangzhou, China

*Corresponding author

E-mail:nwm1225@gmail.com

Abstract

Although the development momentum of the original fashion brand is strong, but due to the impact of competing products, coupled with some resistance of the brand itself, the survival and development of the original fashion brand has been threatened. This paper mainly analyzed the literature, data charts and a few cases, to find out the possible problems in the original clothing brand marketing and put forward the corresponding solutions to these problems. The results were be concluded based on theory and method of the original clothing brand from the brand strategy, communication tactics and promotion strategy, to provide reference for the brand marketing of the original clothing brand enterprises.

Keywords: Original women's clothing brand; marketing strategy; SNBL (SenNvBuLuo).

1. Introduction

Few people liked original brands until a few years ago. Most clothing enterprises only value the immediate interests, follow the principle of selling, take the route from the market. Consumers are not persistent enough on original brands and pursue economic benefits. However, original brands will be the trend of domestic fashion in the future. The era of imitating only large brands is far away, and the era of uniqueness, innovation and pursuit of individuality is coming [1, 2]. In the current situation, we can see from the sales data of a well-known domestic website which provides a professional online shopping platform for original clothes that not only professionals pursue original products, but also many consumers pursue the design uniqueness of original fashion.

Many small and medium-sized customers all like the original brand, because most of the brand design to pursue the novel at the same time, also maintained a high quality, now the consumers no longer satisfied with the goods itself, but rather through goods to pursuit besides practical psychological and spiritual release, clothing brand and the original differences is not only a brand name, but the meaning of culture, market of the brand positioning and design concept, the advantage of the original brand is to simplify the purchase decision of consumers, saving time and effort to buy. The quality of the brand plays a role in reducing purchase risk [3, 4]. For example, the famous domestic original clothing brand "Jiangnan Clothing" emphasizes the individuality of the original and the brand, the pursuit of frankness and nature, its unique design style and practical environmental protection, has been recognized by most consumers, with distinctive Chinese cultural characteristics. Over the past 20 years, their annual sales have exceeded 200 million, and have developed hundreds of dealers and opened more than 500 stores in the first and

second tier cities in mainland China. The JNBY brand has created its brand differentiation and its comprehensive influence is also at the forefront, standing out among the original brands in China.

With the development of new media technology, more and more platforms tend to be integrated and have diversified functions [5, 6]. Xiaohongshu APP (Little Red Book) stands out among the online e-commerce companies by virtue of the operation and management model of "e-commerce + social networking". Little Red Book is a lifestyle information sharing service platform for young people. According to statistics, as of January 2019, the size and number of registered member of Little Red Book all over the country have exceeded 200 million, among which the post-1990 generation is the main active user of Little Red Book platform. The user production model of Xiaohongshu enables the website to integrate various functions such as pictures, videos, and social networking into one, and encourages website users to actively participate in and share various personalized content. With the continuous output and centralized management of high-quality content, a vertical e-commerce platform has been formed. Xiaohongshu takes UGC as the core of its business, without excessive promotion or star and big V effect. Its main operation means are to encourage users of the platform to create valuable content and stimulate other users of the platform to purchase through these output content.

From the perspective of the overall environment of China's e-commerce development, the e-commerce products and services industry are also embracing a transformation from the traditional digital economy to the social economy, and we are embracing such a new era of e-commerce. With the upgrading of mobile Internet, users' experience of products and services has become more and more urgent to be satisfied. Many e-commerce trading platforms have also undergone changes, and e-commerce of content types has gradually entered the main theme. New mobile e-commerce models that attract consumers based on good output and quality content, give them consumption opinions and suggestions, and keep their consumption demands constantly emerging. As traditional e-commerce models have an impact, enterprises must accelerate their pace of transformation and development to "survive". Compared with the traditional new e-commerce, social new media has a temperature, and its influence on everyone is continuous, all-around, and adaptable at any time. Xiaohongshu is remarkably successful in promoting the operation of social e-commerce UGC. The fundamental reason is that online shopping information changes quickly and can provide more production content. Female users in online shopping and other aspects of the sharing demand are strong; The content and value shared have nothing to do with the interests of the platform and depend heavily on the users. Therefore, it is of great value and significance to investigate and analyze the online marketing strategy of Xiaohongshu.

2. Marketing and competition environment of SNBL

2.1. Introduction of original brand SNBL

The original women's wear brand SenNvBuLuo (SNBL) was founded in 2011, which is consistent with the style interests of the founder. SNBL positioning itself as fresh and lovely, and it is featured with all the styles that girls like. Moreover, at that time, there was no brand with prominent style in the strict sense in the girls' market in China, so the emergence of SNBL made up for the market vacancy. The initial stage of the establishment of the brand initiated from Japan's prevailing "Mori Girl". With the development of the market, to build "SNBL" into the No. 1 brand for girls in China, the founder introduced original design in 2016, and embodied the concept of "wearing original clothes, not matching clothes" through submission and customization. This concept was extremely rare in the domestic market at the time, and distinct from the GMV-oriented apparel companies in the industry, original design became the Mori

women's core competitiveness. SNBL 's consumer group is targeted at girls aged 16-23. This group advocates individuality and pursues fashion. Therefore, SNBL integrates the consumption characteristics of this group in product development and design. The products of SNBL are shown in Figure 1.



Fig.1 Product sample of SNBL

2.2. Macro marketing environment analysis of SNBL

2.2.1. Political environment

The output value of China's fashion industry accounts for less than 5% of GDP at present. The excessively low proportion indicates a phenomenon that the fashion industry does not match the GDP growth rate and the fashion industry does not effectively drive the growth of China's GDP. China's fashion industry is also relatively immature. The design and development of many consumer goods are greatly influenced by the clothing industry. The reason is that clothing is a necessity of human beings under the modern economic developed conditions, and it is also a popular FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods). The domestic garment industry is faced with such problems as brand fault, disorderly market competition, chaotic discipline setting, and difficult survival for independent designers. In addition, the domestic garment design education is far behind that of other countries [7]. Therefore, the country begins to focus on supporting fashion design.

2.2.2. Economic environment

The number of online shopping users is growing along with economic growth, Internet penetration and average disposable income. According to the Statistical Report on China's Internet Development, online shopping users in China exceeded 700 million in March 2020, an increase of more than 100 million compared to 2018. The scale and utilization rate of online shopping users are shown in Fig. 2.

In recent years, with the further improvement of Chinese consumers' living standards and consumption level as well as the continuous optimization of clothing e-commerce, consumers' demand for purchasing clothing products has gradually shifted from low price to higher quality [8-10]. Data show that from 2015 to 2019, the market scale of China's apparel e-commerce industry continues to expand with fast growth rate.

The market size of this industry will reach 1013.37 billion yuan in 2019, and is expected to reach 109.44 billion yuan in 2020, and reach 1148.09 billion yuan in 2021. The scale and forecast of China's apparel e-commerce market from 2015 to 2021 are shown in Fig.3.

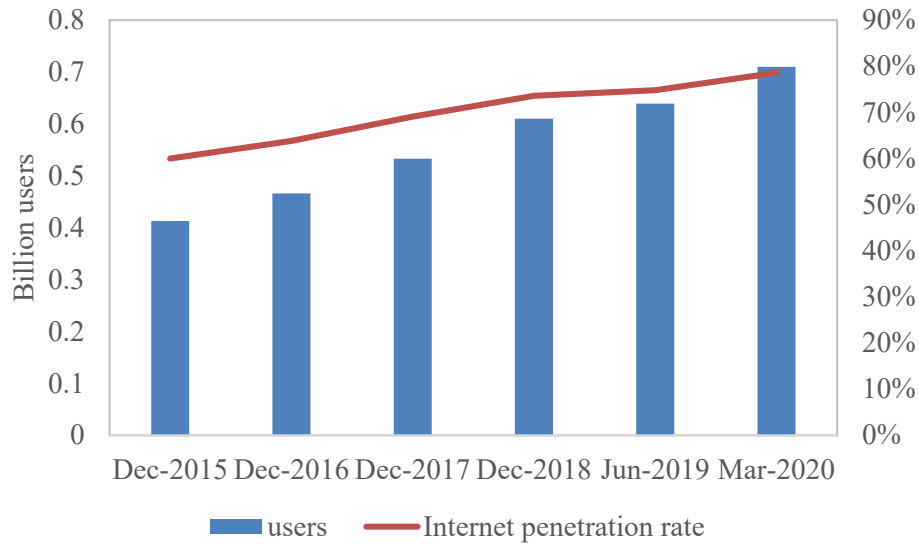


Fig.2 Scale of online shopping users and internet penetration rate

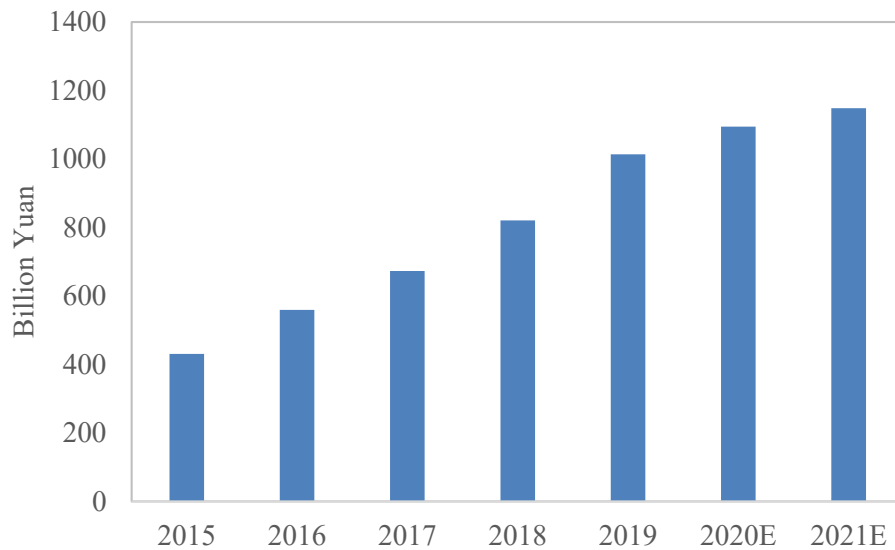


Fig.3 The scale and forecast of China's apparel e-commerce market from 2015 to 2021.

2.2.3. Technical environment

Big data technology can effectively retrieve and apply useful information and knowledge in large-scale data. For example, the fashion brand Zara provides 12,000 different styles of clothing to its customers every year through big data analysis. Through big data analysis, we can accurately understand the clothing preferences of each customer group. Through the calculation results, the recommended data can be obtained directly, which saves time and improves work efficiency. Through the prediction, the most suitable clothing marketing plan for customers can be obtained. Therefore, big data technology is an indispensable

technology in the clothing industry.

So far, the garment industry has experienced the development of informatization and digitalization and is developing to the direction of intelligence. Intelligence includes not only the intelligence of production analysis, but also the intelligence of chemical devices [7]. Through intelligent analysis, information such as standard working hours and standard unit price of clothing can be obtained, which can reduce the workload of personnel and improve work efficiency. For the factory, the use of a variety of modern technology can improve work efficiency, the use of advanced technology can realize automation for the factory office, production, and management, so as to strengthen management, reduce work errors, improve work efficiency, to achieve safety production.

2.2.4. Social environment

The modern clothing industry also bears the soul of The Times because the clothing design in different periods can show the difference of material level, aesthetic taste, and grade. In today's China, people's cultural level is getting higher and higher, and their ideas are getting more and more advanced, so there is a further demand for fashion design. In addition to the improvement of consumption level, consumers not only pursue the practicality of clothing, but also tend to the personality of clothing design, whether it resonates with its consumer psychology [2, 3].

2.3. Competition environment of SNBL

Such stores focus on market segments and usually use marketing methods such as limit or limitless quantity to make amazing sales results in a short period of time. For example, a dress "Shanchui" (see Fig.4) in Zhong brand Uniform store was put on the shelves for only half an hour on September 9, 2020, and the number of sales reached 45,000. Compared with such competitors, SNBL serves the mass market, has more product categories, more choices for consumers, and has a wide brand acceptance.

Original brands of well-known designers take the middle and high-end route, aiming at consumers to pay for the design. The price is high, but consumers have a high stickiness and loyalty to the brand, which leads to a high repurchase rate. Compared with such competitors, SNBL has a relatively affordable price and a distinct difference in consumer group positioning, thus taking advantage of this advantage to gain access to the university market.



Fig.4 The dress of “Shanchui”

With the promotion and popularization of e-commerce, some traditional clothing brands have switched from offline to online. They have set up flagship stores and official websites one after another to realize the linkage between online and offline, which enhances the convenience of shopping and enhances the sense of consumer experience. Compared with this kind of competitors, SNBL started from e-commerce and has more comprehensive experience in e-commerce operation. With the increasingly rich experience in the operation of traditional clothing brands, the threat to original online brands increases.

2.4. Consumers of SNBL

The SNBL brand is positioned as an original girl brand, and its consumer group is girls aged 16-23. This type of consumer group is basically college students. This consumer group has relatively distinct characteristics, including large group number, large consumption power and large market scale. Have fixed living expenses, therefore have certain spot purchasing power; These consumer groups study, work and live together, are of similar ages and share many common consumption characteristics. This group is easy to accept new things, but also easy to follow the trend, with a certain herd mentality; Stimulate such consumer groups to pursue the trend of fashion, ultra-low price, relatively convenient way of purchase; Because the student consumer group is the weak part among consumers, the brand sinking market and the price strategy is particularly important [1]. The market for such consumer groups is also growing steadily; Because the consumption variables are relatively easy to describe and control, it is a relatively simple market for brands [11-13].

From the data of clothing and footwear purchase channel of Chinese college students in 2021, domestic online shopping is the main channel for college students to buy clothing, accounting for 58.4%. The SNBL is mainly engaged in online shops, which is consistent with the characteristics of college students' preference for online shopping. The clothing purchasing channels of Chinese college students in 2021 are shown in Fig.5.

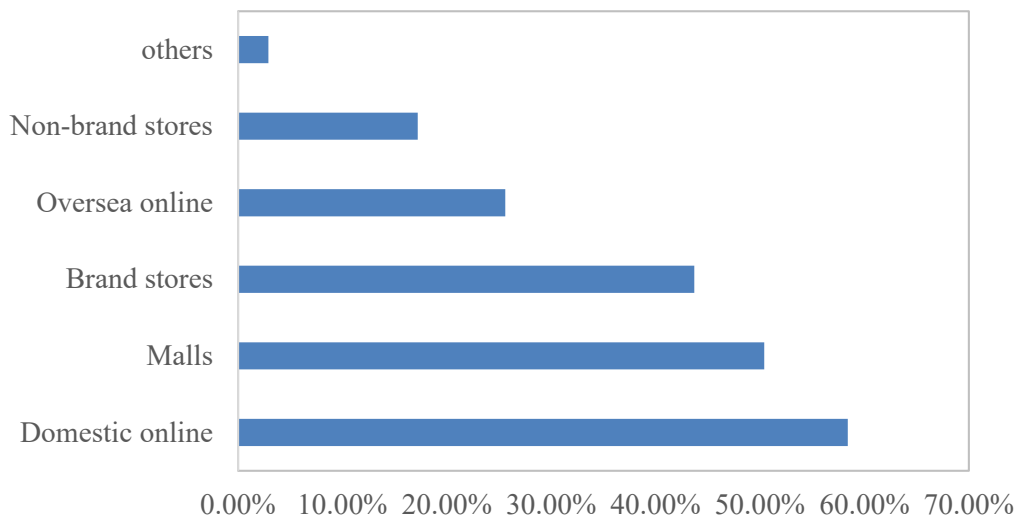


Fig.5 The clothing purchasing channels of Chinese college students in 2021.

3. SWOT analysis on marketing strategy of SNBL

3.1. Strength

3.1.1. Fast product development

Tmall flagship store presents new styles of products 4 times a month, fixed on every Saturday, with more than 20 kinds for each new store. From a consumer perspective, the faster a product is updated, the easier it is to retain customers and promote conversion. With the continuous diversification of consumer demand, the acceleration of product update can effectively stimulate consumption, to maximize the profit. Accelerating the speed of brand updating can effectively put pressure on competitors and establish the brand positioning of diversified products.

3.1.2. Cooperation with popular IP to obtain a larger market

Recently, many brands have launched the marketing model of cross-boundary cooperation. Cross-boundary cooperation can continuously expand the brand market, bring freshness to inherent consumers, and make the brand image continuously three-dimensional. Today's young people pursue personality and fashion, and they like beautiful, funny, and easy-to-use ideas and products. SNBL has joined hands with popular IP Moka Sakura, Disney, National Treasure, and other brands, and has won another batch of young market.

3.1.3. Close price to the young people

Clothing prices in the store are within 300 yuan, about 100-yuan goods account for the vast majority, there are a lot of goods below 100 yuan. The consumer group of the brand is targeted at young girls aged 16-23. This group is basically students with no fixed income and low consumption level, but they pursue personality and fashion, and the price is affordable, which is also in line with the consumer group positioning of the brand.

3.2. Weakness

The quality of products needs to be improved. Judging from the current online search and in-person shopping experience, the quality of brand clothing needs to be improved. Product quality has a direct impact on consumers' shopping experience. While ensuring high quality and low price, it is also necessary to keep good quality. On the one hand, quality directly affects the store's novelty rate and re-purchase rate; on the other hand, quality is the premise for enterprises to establish a brand. Without high-quality products, it is difficult to establish a good brand image.

The brand pursues the current trend too much. After JK became popular, it began to sell JK clothing, and later sold Hanfu (Han Chinese Clothing) and Lolita clothing, etc., which was not significantly different from the original Sankeng clothing store. The most direct result of poor differentiation is customer loss. Therefore, the brand should implement the differentiation strategy. On the one hand, it is significantly helpful to the improvement of brand loyalty, and on the other hand, it is also the most effective way for the brand to throw off competitors in the market.

3.3. Opportunities

Set up physical stores and realize online and offline linkage is one way to compete with other brands. The brand started from e-commerce, but now there are only online stores, so physical stores can be set up appropriately. On one hand, sales channels can be increased, on the other hand, customer experience can be improved, and the turnover rate of the store can be improved. The biggest disadvantage of e-commerce is that it cannot provide customers with experience. It will be a general trend for e-commerce to open physical stores. It can adopt a new e-commerce model: O2O+F2C+ membership system.

Get the crowd outside the Xiaohongshu station through the output of text, short video and other contents. With the promotion of the new model of "social e-commerce", merchants can release product-related content on new media platforms such as Xiaohongshu and Douyin (known as TikTok worldwide), to obtain more free off-site traffic and increase the natural search traffic of stores, to increase user stickiness and improve user activity [14-16].

Due to the single marketing channel of SNBL at present, physical stores, Tmall, Jingdong, Vipshop and other sales channels can be added to occupy all kinds of consumer markets. The establishment of physical stores is mainly aimed at people who do not often shop online. These people often enjoy the service experience of offline shopping and the "tangible" experience of physical goods. Comprehensive online shopping platforms such as Tmall and Jingdong have a wider audience and a certain pursuit for the superfluidity and quality of brand products. Vipshop is a brand discount platform, and consumers on this platform tend to pursue high-cost performance of products. Based on the consumption pursuit of different channels, to develop different promotion strategies, to create greater profit space for the brand.

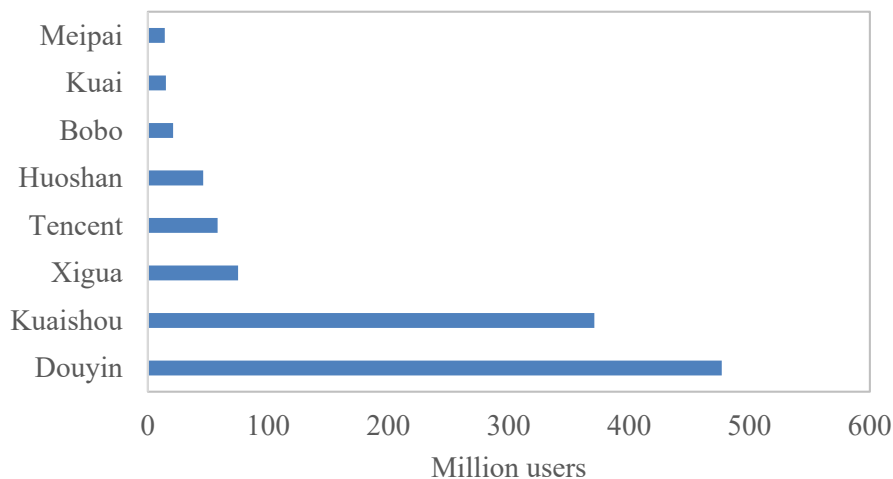


Fig.6 Active users of short video app in China in July of 2020.

The rapid development of social e-commerce and live broadcasting e-commerce has greatly driven the growth of online consumption and constantly injected new impetus to online consumption. Social and live streaming e-commerce bring different pre-consumption experience to consumers, forming a new model of online consumption. Social e-commerce products use experience sharing and suggestion function to replace the detail page function of traditional e-commerce and resonate with consumers; Or through the promotion of the talent, the output of valuable content, to influence its fans to promote sales growth. In 2019, the transaction volume of social e-commerce increased by more than 60% year on year. The potential of the social e-commerce market is not to be underestimated. On the other hand, live streaming e-commerce is based on the trust of fans through the effects of stars, celebrities, and talents. By March 2020, e-commerce live streaming users had reached 265 million, accounting for 37.2% of online users and 47.3% of live streaming users, respectively. Whether it is store self-broadcast or off-site live broadcast, anchors need to continuously optimize their speech skills and enhance their promotion ability, to bring rapid growth of sales in a short time. The advantage of live streaming e-commerce lies in the enhanced interaction with consumers, which greatly saves the time for users to understand the products [17-19].

3.4. Threats

The homogenization of goods is quite serious. At present, the store sells too many identical goods of Sankeng clothing. It is necessary to seek differentiation or create differentiation with competing products. The search for differentiation can start from the nature of the product itself, such as the design concept, etc. To create differentiation, we can start from product packaging and so on. Then promote in right content according to the difference of marketing costs in the right channels.

Once the target market is determined, the brand must determine the market positioning and the particularity of the product. Based on previous brand marketing practice experience, if the product similarity is too high in the market or the same product appears too many times in the market, it will lose its particularity and customers will often not remember this kind of product. Therefore, the brand wants to occupy a certain target market, and its products should meet the requirements of novel style and original ideas, to get rid of some competitors and occupy a certain market advantage.

Differences include the following three aspects. (1) Entity differentiation of products. Entity differentiation of products includes product characteristics, product quality, product style, etc. Product characteristics can start from the details, highlighting the particularity of the product. Product quality is an important factor for the long-term development of a brand, so we should strictly observe the quality of products. The product style should start from the design concept of the brand, and the product should adhere to the brand tone. (2) Service differentiation. If the gap between the brand and the competing products is not obvious, we can break through from the service aspect. There are many brands on the market pay too much attention to the product itself and neglect the service, service can add value to the brand to some extent. Consumers not only pay attention to product quality and novelty, but also pay attention to brand service, including pre-sale consultation, logistics company selection, logistics time and after-sales service. High quality service can often enhance the customer experience, thus enhancing customer loyalty to the brand. (3) Image differentiation. Product image is the foundation of brand image formation. The establishment of brand image depends on the product image. Consumers have a vague concept of brand, so as the best medium, consumers transfer their evaluation of products to the brand and form a good brand image [2, 3].

In view of the current brand positioning of SNBL, the brand can continue to adhere to the Mori + original style positioning in the future, by insisting on product quality first, providing characteristic product packaging, providing quality customer service, etc., to enhance consumers' dependence on the brand, and continue to create profits and development space for the brand.

4. Conclusions

First, through the analysis of the macro marketing environment, industry competition and consumer groups of the original women's clothing brand SNBL, it is concluded that the original clothing brand is the future trend, college students are its main consumer groups, and the consumer market is very considerable. On this basis, the brand needs to constantly clarify the brand positioning, enhance the competitiveness of the brand itself in the industry.

Secondly, through the research on the marketing strategy of SNBL, there is still room for improvement in its brand strategy, communication strategy and promotion strategy. Brands can increase brand awareness through differentiated positioning strategy, visual optimization strategy, in-depth communication strategy, social media promotion strategy and other methods, to promote sales.

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by Department of Education of Zhejiang Province (Y201942874) and Zhejiang International Studies University. The authors would also like to extend thanks to anonymous reviewers for the improvement of this paper.

References

- [1] De Sousa J H. Analysis of the use of experiential marketing strategies by a Brazilian clothing brand [J]. *Navus-Revista De Gestao E Tecnologia*, 2020, 10
- [2] Vlasic G, Hair J, Krupka Z. Star Marketer's Impact on the Market Strategy Choice [J]. *Management-Journal of Contemporary Management Issues*, 2017, 22 (2): 1-13.
- [3] Sithole L, Sithole N J, Chirimuta C. Marketing challenges experienced by small-to-medium enterprises over formal clothing industries in Harare, Zimbabwe [J]. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 2018, 4 (1): 1488234.
- [4] Yao Y S, Xu Y. Dynamic decision making in mass customization [J]. *Computers & Industrial Engineering*, 2018, 120: 129-136
- [5] Chen C L. Cross-disciplinary innovations by Taiwanese manufacturing SMEs in the context of Industry 4.0 [J]. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*, 2020, 31 (6): 1145-1168.
- [6] Ananda A S, Hernandez-Garcia A, Lamberti L. N-REL: A comprehensive framework of social media marketing strategic actions for marketing organizations [J]. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 2016, 1 (3): 170-180.
- [7] Katsikeas C, Leonidou L, Zeriti A. Revisiting international marketing strategy in a digital era Opportunities, challenges, and research directions [J]. *International Marketing Review*, 2020, 37 (3): 405-424.
- [8] Varinli I, Basyazicioglu N. Analyzing Consumer Attitudes Toward Marketing Applications On Facebook With Path Analysis [J]. *Ege Academic Review*, 2016, 16 (1): 109-119.
- [9] Li E F, Larimo J, Leonidou. Social media marketing strategy: definition, conceptualization, taxonomy, validation, and future agenda [J]. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 2020, 49 (1): 51-70.
- [10] Wang R, Chan-Olmsted S. Content marketing strategy of branded YouTube channels [J]. *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 2020, 17 (3-4): 294-316.
- [11] Brun A, Castelli C. Supply chain strategy in the fashion industry: Developing a portfolio model depending on product, retail channel and brand [J]. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 2008, 116 (2): 169-181.
- [12] Ang T, Wei S Q, Anaza N A. Livestreaming vs pre-recorded: How social viewing strategies impact consumers' viewing experiences and behavioral intentions [J]. *European Journal of Marketing*, 2018, 52 (9-10): 2075-2104.
- [13] Chirumalla K, Oghazi P, Parida V. Social media engagement strategy: Investigation of marketing and R&D interfaces in manufacturing industry [J]. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 2018, 74: 138-149.
- [14] Malesev S, Cherry M. Digital and Social Media Marketing - Growing Market Share for Construction SMEs [J]. *Construction Economics and Building*, 2021, 21 (1): 65-82.
- [15] Drummond C, O'Toole T, McGrath H. Digital engagement strategies and tactics in social media marketing [J]. *European Journal of Marketing*, 2020, 54 (6): 1247-1280.
- [16] Lin G Y, Wang Y S, Wang Y M, et al. What drives people's intention toward live stream broadcasting [J]. *Online Information Review*, 2021, DOI: 10.1108/OIR-10-2020-0466
- [17] Li Y, Li X L, Cai J L. How attachment affects user stickiness on live streaming platforms: A socio-technical approach perspective [J]. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 2021, 102478.
- [18] Singh S, Singh N, Kalinic Z, et al, Assessing determinants influencing continued use of live streaming services: An extended perceived value theory of streaming addiction [J]. *Expert Systems with Applications*, 2021, 168: 114241.

[19] Guo L Y, Hu X Y, Lu J X, et al. Effects of customer trust on engagement in live streaming commerce: mediating role of swift guanxi [J]. Internet Research, 2021, DOI: 10.1108/INTR-02-2020-0078