

A Study on Marketing Strategies for Mobile Online Games from the Perspective of Consumer Behavior

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the factors influencing the marketing of mobile online games from the perspective of consumer behavior and provide practical marketing strategies for companies whose main business is mobile online games. By reviewing relevant literature on the development of consumer behavior theory and analyzing consumer behavior, this study identifies the factors that affect marketing strategies for mobile online games. The research findings suggest that successful mobile online game marketing requires a comprehensive consideration of consumer demands, competitor analysis, and brand positioning, as well as the implementation of targeted strategies. By integrating brand strategies, pricing strategies, channel strategies, and marketing strategies, mobile online games can be effectively promoted and attract more users. These strategies not only provide valuable references and insights for mobile online game companies to gain a competitive advantage in highly competitive market environments but also open up new perspectives and directions for future research in related fields.

KEYWORDS

Mobile online games; Consumer behavior; Marketing strategies; Brand positioning; Channel optimization

1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile online games, also known as mobile games, refer to games that allow players to interact and compete with others online through mobile devices connected to the internet. These games typically require players to download and install specific applications and communicate with servers through the mobile network connection. With the rapid development of technology, the widespread use of mobile internet technology has become particularly evident. According to Ma Mingyang's research [1], the "iiMedia Research 2016 Q2 China Mobile Game Market Quarterly Monitoring Report" clearly shows that in the second quarter of 2016, the overall revenue scale of the Chinese mobile game market reached 8.05 billion yuan, an increase of 12.6% compared to the previous quarter. The total number of mobile game users in China reached 572 million, an increase of 4.3%. These data indicate that the total scale of the mobile game market in China is continuously expanding, and mobile games have become an indispensable form of entertainment in modern society. The popularity of smartphones worldwide, coupled with the continuous improvement of mobile internet technology, has led to the rapid rise of the mobile game market. This not only brings significant business opportunities to the gaming industry but also presents new challenges and opportunities in the field of marketing. People can access and play online games anytime and anywhere through their mobile phones, greatly satisfying the demand for leisure and entertainment in fast-paced lives. From casual puzzles to role-playing games, from solo challenges to multiplayer competitions, mobile games

attract players of different age groups with their diverse types and convenience. The rise of the mobile game market has not only changed people's ways of entertainment but also propelled the rapid development of the gaming industry. More and more game developers and investors have seen the enormous potential of this market and have joined the competition in the mobile game market, resulting in a diverse and fiercely competitive market.

Xin Yan's analysis [2] of consumer behavior reveals that consumers have different needs, and different patterns need to be adopted to sustain long-term benefits for different user groups. Therefore, companies involved in the mobile game industry need to carefully study consumer groups and adopt the right combination of marketing methods to enhance the promotion of their online games. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors influencing the marketing of online games from the perspective of consumer behavior and provide reference marketing strategies for relevant companies. This will help companies gain a relative competitive advantage in the fiercely competitive market, providing them with new perspectives and ideas.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of consumer behavior has been ongoing in Western capitalist markets since the 1960s. The customer-centric concept has been widely recognized not only in academia but also in practice. In the 1980s, research on consumer behavior began to integrate multiple disciplines, including psychology, anthropology, economics, and sociology. Olshavsky & Granbois [3] argue that consumer behavior is often influenced by unconscious factors, which are influenced by individual and social factors. Vohs & Faber [4] suggest that consumer choices and desires are largely influenced by external stimuli. In other words, through appropriate guidance, consumer decision-making can be effectively influenced to benefit businesses. Lobbe [5] found that subjective, emotional, and cognitive factors play a significant role in consumer behavior and are easily influenced by external factors. Carroll [6] suggests that increasing consumer income stimulates more consumption behavior. Tim Fields [7] states that mobile games need to generate revenue through value-added services, including game content, unlocking and selling game items, as well as advertising revenue generated by in-game advertisements.

In China, research on consumer behavior has been conducted for a long time. Fan Wenjuan [8] analyzes the corresponding behavior of Chinese consumers from the perspective of development stages and levels and summarizes their characteristics. Scholars have conducted in-depth research on the factors influencing consumer behavior. Liu Yiquan [9] analyzes consumer behavior from the perspective of the relationship between subjects and objects. Xing Guannan and Zhang Quancheng [10] classify the factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions based on the campus context into four levels. Internet Weekly [11] points out the differences between mobile games and PC online games, suggesting that the development of manufacturers in these two areas will gradually diverge. Internet companies will further utilize the Internet, such as the Internet of Things and enterprise networks. The communication industry will develop a more diverse industry relying on mobile clients, and mobile games are one of them. With the support of the Internet's large platform and independent mobile network operating platforms, mobile games can achieve sustainable development through reasonable technical allocation.

Consumer behavior refers to the comprehensive manifestation of consumers' psychological and practical aspects, including their needs, purchasing motivations, and consumption intentions. In the study of consumer behavior, two aspects can be considered. Firstly, what choices consumers make when purchasing something, which refers to consumer purchasing decisions. Secondly, the behaviors consumers exhibit when making purchases, which refers to consumer behavior. Consumer decision-making can be regarded as a psychological activity that influences consumers' psychological tendencies before purchasing a product or service. Understanding these aspects helps attract consumers' attention during product or service sales. Consumer behavior is based on consumer

decisions and practical activities, and the two are interdependent and inseparable. The combination of these two parts forms the complete process of consumer behavior. Player consumption behavior refers to the purchase and use of products and value-added services related to online games by online game players.

Marketing theory provides a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing consumer behavior. Bao Yan [11] believes that the main factors influencing consumer behavior are related to consumers' characteristics, including cultural, psychological, and social characteristics. These characteristics are closely related to consumers' growth experiences and cannot be changed by businesses. To encourage consumers to purchase their products, businesses must take these characteristics into account and align their product attributes or marketing methods with these characteristics to stimulate strong purchasing desires in consumers.

From a psychological perspective, consumer purchasing behavior is an individual behavior that is influenced by groups. In other words, consumers' consumption patterns are inevitably influenced by factors such as their geographical, ethnic, national, and cultural characteristics. Consumers can naturally influence their own consumption activities, but more often, their consumption psychology is subtly influenced by certain factors. However, consumer purchasing behavior is ultimately influenced by individuals' subjective consciousness. It is a combination of internal and external factors that ultimately leads to consumer decision-making. These external and internal factors not only shape important components of consumers' personal characteristics but also serve as important factors that induce consumer purchasing psychology. External factors can be seen as shaping consumers' social characteristics, such as social and cultural aspects, while internal factors are closely related to consumers' personal experiences, especially their needs and desires.

3. MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR MOBILE GAMES

3.1. Brand Strategy

As mobile online games primarily target players, establishing a good brand reputation is crucial for innovation. For example, designing and developing mobile online game products based on Chinese players' preferences for payment, channel selection, and requirements for operators. Additionally, product innovation should focus on enhancing the game's amusement value and user-friendly experience, continuously improving the user experience in terms of visuals, sounds, and other aspects. In summary, these efforts lay a solid foundation for brand establishment in the mobile online game industry. Li Yi and Pei Xudong [12] suggest that the brand establishment for mobile online games should focus on six aspects: detailed consumer demand analysis, identifying competitors and clarifying the game's positioning, testing consumer preferences, refining the brand's core competitive value based on competitive advantages, establishing the brand position of the mobile game, and communicating and monitoring the brand positioning. According to Qiao Yuqian's article [13], Tencent's MOBA mobile game "Honor of Kings" successfully shaped a powerful brand image through continuous user research, data analysis, understanding user needs, and optimizing game content and experience. In general, the brand establishment for mobile online games should be based on in-depth research on consumer and competitor groups, as well as meticulous brand marketing

3.2. Pricing Strategy

Currently, the basic pricing strategies for mobile games include skimming pricing and penetration pricing. Skimming pricing involves setting high prices for products at the initial launch to maximize profits. This strategy is effective when competitors have not entered the market yet and the product is protected by patents, allowing the company to further develop and recoup investments. On the other hand, penetration pricing sets low prices for products to attract consumers and quickly gain market share. Product bundle pricing strategies include pricing for product categories, select products,

complementary products, divisions, by-products, and product lines. There are various ways to implement product bundle pricing, providing ample choices. In the current situation where the pricing model for Chinese mobile games is too focused on low prices, it is important to consider the aforementioned pricing strategies. Relying solely on a low-price penetration model to expand the market, especially when introducing new products, is not sufficient. Generally, adopting a low-price penetration model requires three conditions: a large market potential, high price elasticity of demand, and the ability to significantly reduce production costs and sales expenses with sales expansion. Hu Zhiang [14] conducted research on precise marketing strategies for miHoYo and found that their open-world adventure game utilized various payment models, including in-game purchases and monthly subscriptions, to meet different players' payment preferences. The current low-price or free model for Chinese mobile games has not achieved high user stickiness, nor has it prevented blind competition entry. In this situation, a diversified pricing strategy becomes particularly important.

3.3. Distribution Strategy

Effective distribution channels play a crucial role in promoting and delivering mobile games. Liu Mengzhi and Zhang Ruijun [15] conducted in-depth research on Tencent's shooting game "Peacekeeper Elite" and found that Tencent achieved convenient payment experiences through cooperation with mobile operators and payment platforms. Additionally, extensive promotion through social media and live streaming platforms attracted a large number of players. Therefore, mobile game companies can ensure smooth and secure payment channels by collaborating with mobile operators and payment platforms. Furthermore, they should establish partnerships with advertisers and utilize new media for game promotion. Leveraging the functionality of mobile devices, they can establish mobile social networks, creating close connections between players and the game company and building a mobile gaming platform. When operators, enterprises, and manufacturers collaborate and enter the market together, the interaction and stickiness of mobile game users will increase. A convenient distribution policy is also an important factor influencing user behavior.

3.4. Marketing Strategy

Yang Bo [16] suggests that successful marketing should adhere to five principles: seeking differentiation, clarifying integrity, pursuing economies of scale, being pragmatic, and optimizing resources. These principles not only provide a theoretical basis for product marketing strategies but also guide diverse marketing approaches. Currently, in China, there is a lack of innovative marketing and promotion methods. Under the guidance of these five principles, a variety of marketing methods should be employed, such as advertising, business promotion, public relations, personnel sales, marketing mix, and integrated marketing communication, to effectively consolidate and formulate strategies, continuously expand the user base and scale of Chinese mobile games. It is important to note that blindly copying marketing methods from domestic and foreign peers without considering the actual situation of the mobile game industry will not only hinder the development of unique characteristics but also isolate the company from the marketing mix, resulting in failed innovation and poor outcomes. Fang Yuqing and Dong Minhua [17] analyzed the marketing strategies of NetEase's mobile game "Onmyoji" and found that organizing various online and offline activities, such as voice actor meetings and cosplay contests, successfully attracted a large number of players and increased the game's visibility and user stickiness. Therefore, in the current era, "marketing" is not limited to "price reduction." Modern marketing should focus on ubiquitous marketing methods, integrating marketing into products, packaging, logos, social media, websites, stations, and people's conversations. From products to channels to users, marketing should closely follow, ultimately connecting users and products to cultivate usage habits.

4. CONCLUSION

The mobile game market has rapidly developed as a mainstream form of entertainment in modern society, driven by mobile internet technology. In this highly competitive market, understanding the factors influencing consumer behavior in mobile game marketing is essential. This study has analyzed the impact factors of consumer behavior and proposed marketing strategies for mobile game companies. These strategies, including brand shaping, diversified pricing, optimized distribution channels, and diverse marketing approaches, provide references and insights for mobile game companies to gain a competitive advantage in the fiercely competitive market. Additionally, they offer new perspectives and ideas for future research.

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