

The Impact of The Star Effect and E-Marketing Strategy in Basketball Events -Taking NBA and CBA as Examples

Ce Zhang¹, Yixin Huang², Liyang Li^{3, *}

¹ Beijing No.161 High School, Beijing, China

² Shenzhen Senior High School Group, Shenzhen, China

³ Guangzhou Foreign Language School, Guangzhou, China

* Corresponding Author Email: 1812010903@stu.hrbust.edu.cn

Abstract. Under the trends of digitization and globalization, the marketing strategy for basketball events has undergone rapid changes. The application of network marketing in promoting and broadcasting basketball events has become increasingly prevalent. Through literature analysis, marketing model analysis, and case analysis, this study finds that network marketing significantly impacts tournament organization and the expansion of basketball's influence. Leveraging the star effect can help enhance influence and promote economic value improvement. Established professional leagues like the NBA have experienced the amplification effect of combining digital marketing with traditional media marketing; however, they should also be cautious not to overly rely on the star effect by considering strategic breakthroughs. Developing leagues like CBA should also focus on expanding their network marketing strategies in related fields. Through the combination of different network marketing strategies to expand the promotion of professional basketball competition in the Chinese market, to enhance the sustainable development of Chinese basketball.

Keywords: E-marketing, Celebrity effect, Basketball events, NBA, CBA.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, there is a growing reliance on mobile networks, and the mode of information reception has shifted from traditional print media to internet marketing content accessible via mobile devices, such as short videos and live streaming. E-marketing has emerged in response to the rise of internet mobile marketing[1]. Common forms of E-marketing now include content marketing, channel marketing, persona marketing, product marketing, and live streaming marketing. Consequently, E-marketing's financial and human resource investments for various sports events are rapidly escalating[1].

Social media has become the most innovative and effective public relations tool. With the development of tools such as social media and online marketing, public relations have shifted to a more fluid and integrated mode of communication [1]. Practitioners must successfully combine traditional strategies with new media strategies to produce effective PR campaigns[1]. Network marketing should focus on controlling the quality of live or rebroadcast content, fully mobilize the emotions of online viewers, and then improve the platform praise [2]. However, in the online marketing promotion of basketball games under the background of new media, there is too much emphasis on traffic, neglect of the quality of the promotion content, non-standard promotion content, lack of humanistic care, imperfect copyright protection mechanism of the games under new media, lack of certain rationality of the games, and over-reliance on online media[2]. Ignoring the complementary of different media and the excessive influx of capital leads to the event transmission being kidnapped by capital[2].

Based on the above market status, it is found that there are some problems in network marketing in sports events, such as capital control, low interpretation quality, and poor interactivity. Therefore, through literature research and marketing model analysis, this paper takes the National Basketball Association (NBA) and Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) as two major sports events, through

star effect, star commentary, and other strategies analysis, to find the way for the broadcast platform of sports events to increase the heat, and then promote the profit of the broadcast platform of sports events while creating a better atmosphere for the market of basketball events broadcast. The purpose is to explore how to effectively use a variety of network marketing strategies to enhance the popularity of sports events broadcast, and the impact of network marketing on the national expansion of sports events, to help broadcast platforms and the sports industry expand their influence, and help sports flourish the trend of popularization from the aspects of economic value, health value and popularity value.

2. E-marketing and celebrity effect in NBA and CBA

2.1. E-marketing and celebrity effect in the sports profession

marketing is the strategy of using the Internet and digital media to promote and market products or services. It includes multiple forms of search engine optimization, social media marketing, content marketing, and more, designed to attract and acquire target audiences, thereby increasing brand awareness and driving sales[3]. Through E-marketing strategies, clubs can achieve precision marketing, increased interactivity, and access to large amounts of data analysis. Star economy is a new product of the modern marketing market, mainly through the use of "traffic" high stars or celebrities to drive the public's attention to a certain thing to rapidly increase, thus forming the result of "curve marketing"[3,4]. As an important factor in the generation of the star economy, the star effect refers to the means to expand marketing effect and popularity through the use of market attention "flow"[4]. The combination of these two methods can effectively increase the affection of basketball in the sports profession.

There are also some disadvantages in the E-marketing. Through the analysis (Figure 1), it can be found that the income and effectiveness of network marketing will be greatly affected by the development of the social environment [3,4,5]. However, the combination of network marketing and star effect means has a very powerful effect on the national promotion of sports events [5]. At the same time, an effective network marketing strategy can also greatly improve the marketing effect and sports event profit (Figure 2) [3,4,5].

Political	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulations and policies: Government regulations and policies for the sports industry may affect online marketing activities, such as data protection regulations, copyright laws, and advertising regulations. 2. Trade restrictions: International trade policies and restrictions may affect the development of transnational network marketing activities. 3. Government support: The government may support the online marketing activities of the sports industry through subsidies, tax incentives, etc.
Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic cycle: A recession may reduce a company's budget for online marketing, while an economic boom may increase investment. 2. Consumer spending: Rising consumer disposable income is likely to boost demand for sporting events and related products. 3. Sponsor investment: The economic situation affects the budget of sponsors, which in turn affects their investment in the online marketing of sports events.
Social	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consumer behavior: Changes in social trends and consumer preferences affect online marketing strategies, such as the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle that may increase interest in sporting events. 2. Demographics: Population groups of different ages and cultural backgrounds may have different interests and ways of participating in sports events. 3. Social media use: The popularity of social media provides new platforms and tools for online marketing in the sports industry.
Technological	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internet and mobile technology: The popularity of high-speed Internet and smartphones makes online marketing activities more convenient and efficient. 2. Data analytic tools: The application of big data and analytic tools can help the sports industry better understand consumer behavior and optimize marketing strategies. 3. Virtual Reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR): These technologies offer new ways to watch and interact with sporting events, enhancing the appeal of online marketing. 4. Social media platforms: Constantly updated social media platforms offer a variety of online marketing tools and advertising options.

Figure 1. Analysis of E-marketing with the PEST method

Broaden the audience	Through online marketing, sporting events can reach a global audience, regardless of geographical location. This helps to attract a wider fan base, including sports fans who might not be able to be there in person.
Raise awareness of the event	Through search engine optimization, social media marketing, and online advertising, the online visibility of the event can be improved, thereby increasing public awareness of the event.
Enhance fan engagement	Social media platforms provide opportunities to interact with fans, such as through tweets, posts, live streams, and comments, which help build fan communities and increase their engagement.
Provide a personalized experience	Through data analytic, sports events can deliver personalized content and promotions based on fan preferences and behaviors to enhance the fan experience.
Increase revenue sources	E-marketing can help sports events increase revenue through online advertising, sponsor partnerships, merchandise sales, and paid live broadcasts.
Provide real-time updates	Sports events can provide real-time game updates, statistics, and analytic through online marketing, which is critical to keeping fans interested and engaged.

Figure 2. The benefits of E-marketing and celebrity effect in sports event promotion

2.2. E-marketing and celebrity effect in NBA

The National Basketball Association (NBA) is the world's leading basketball association with a long history. It was founded in 1946 as Boston Athletic Association (BAA) and has a history of 76 years. It not only has a high influence in the United States but also has a large fan base and a wide market around the world. The NBA is one of the richest sports leagues in the world, and NBA players enjoy the highest salaries in the global sports world[6].

The salary of an NBA player varies greatly depending on the player's experience, performance, and market value. High-valued players also known as those superstars have more opportunities to get higher salaries[6]. The data for the 2024-25 season, the NBA's salary cap is set at \$140.588 million and the luxury tax threshold is \$170.814 million which means that teams can't go over or exceed more than a penny to the salary cap when signing players, especially superstars like LeBron, or they will have to pay an additional luxury tax. In the 2024-25 season, Stephen Curry leads the league with an annual salary of \$55,761,216[7]. Therefore, in the long history of the NBA, basketball legends such as Michael Jordan, Kevin Durant, and LeBron James have not only become iconic figures in the sports world with their excellent skills and competitive spirit but also hugely enhanced the appeal of the game with their unique personal charm[6,7]. Even, the team despite incurring significant costs through the acquisition of star players, can ensure a higher return on investment by leveraging the network effect generated from broadcasting the event and securing continued sponsorship participation[9]. Similarly, It is the existence of these basketball legends that has made the NBA one of the most popular sports leagues in the world. The presence of exceptional stars and teams at NBA events can also ensure high audience ratings and influence for the event, thereby enhancing the discourse power and commercial value of NBA events in the basketball industry[7]. In addition, the NBA continues to innovate and make games more engaging and enjoyable to remain competitive in

the sports market. For example, the NBA uses the Masters game to attract fans who don't follow the league in the first place. Promote the diversity of the fan base through effective online promotion and co-marketing of celebrities or idols in other fields[6,7].

The NBA's global expansion has not been without its challenges. While the NBA's fan base has grown through ongoing online marketing, its potential has yet to be fully tapped in key markets such as Europe and Asia. This may be due to factors such as cultural differences, competition in the local sports market, and the relatively late start of basketball in these regions[7,8]. In addition, the NBA faces competition from other sports leagues that have deep traditions and broad audience bases in certain regions. Sports such as soccer (La Liga), football (NFL), and baseball (MLB) compete directly with the NBA in online marketing to attract viewers, which may distract the NBA's audience and affect its market share. Examples include La Liga, which has a strong fan base, and the NFL, the largest football league in the United States[6,7,8]. Meanwhile, the NBA's business operations are also challenged. Unpredictable factors like economic crises can all have an impact on the NBA's commercial revenues and operations[7,8].

2.3. E-marketing and celebrity effect in CBA

The China Basketball Association (CBA) is the highest professional basketball league in China. The CBA was established in 1995 and has 20 teams. It is the best and most standardized professional league in China in terms of scale, management, operation, and attention, and is also the highest-level basketball league in Asia[9].

The advantage of CBA is that CBA league has a huge potential fan base and consumer base. According to the statistical analysis of China's Tencent platform, it reaches about 500 million people, as do basketball fans, with as many as 150 million core basketball fans and even more pan-basketball fans. The huge potential fan base means a huge market and room for business development[9].

For such a vast basketball fan base, the utilization of star power combined with the timeliness, convenience, and content diversity of online marketing can swiftly capture market attention, enhance industry focus, and boost economic gains from the event[9,10]. However, the CBA's implementation of stars and their associated effects is considerably less developed compared to the NBA. The NBA successfully molded its number one superstar, Michael Jordan, who has become an emblematic figure representing the essence of basketball in fans' hearts. Their unwavering loyalty towards him has reached its pinnacle[9]. Thus, through harnessing Jordan's immense star power, the NBA league has garnered substantial benefits and established a remarkable reputation[10]. It is precisely due to countless NBA stars that the significance of this league surpasses what was initially bestowed upon it by professional basketball itself. This kind of triumphant star influence is what currently eludes the CBA[9,10]. Fortunately, though, Yao Ming, Yi Jianlian, Zhou Qi, Wang Zhelin, Guo Ailun, and other stars have emerged within CBA ranks. Their presence aids in expanding CBA event influence through online celebrity classes and guest appearances for commentary purposes these channels facilitate content promotion while simultaneously augmenting economic value and industry recognition for CBA events ultimately propelling them towards becoming China's premier basketball extravaganza[9,10].

Secondly, E-marketing also plays a crucial role in delivering personalized experiences, real-time updates, and enhancing fan engagement[10]. In recent years, the broadcast and live streaming of CBA events through online Sports platforms has resulted in an over fivefold increase in the number of fans compared to earlier years when they were only televised. Simultaneously, with the advancement of network marketing, CBA event organizers can promptly gather feedback from their NBA fans through audience interactions on online platforms[9,10]. Additionally, overseas network platforms facilitate video downloads for learning purposes related to NBA games. Moreover, it aids CBA event organizers in compensating for the limited scheduling opportunities within current event organization practices that hinder athletes' ability to engage in practical drills focusing on skill development and tactics training[9]. This limitation is detrimental to enriching and accumulating competitive

experience while diminishing enjoyment and influence during matches. Furthermore, online marketing assists in expanding ticket sales channels as well as promoting secondary product sales[10,11]. For instance, online sports platform incorporates options such as team jerseys and stadium catering packages within the CBA event match ticket interface. The selection of ticket channels for CBA events will also collaborate with multiple platforms[9,10,11]. This approach not only ensures an impact on-site experience but also enhances overall social influence by capturing attention from diverse potential consumers across various platforms.

3. Suggestion

Through the analysis of the NBA and CBA, the two major basketball professional league associations, it was found that the star effect has a great impact on the promotion of sports events. At the same time, the advantages of online digital marketing strategies and digital platforms with no time limit and no geographical restrictions can maximize the promotion ability and competitive value of professional leagues in the basketball industry[11]. However, it was also found that the current electronic marketing strategies adopted by major sports events and basketball associations are characterized by content homogeneity, targeted fan groups being too narrow, and excessive reliance on fan effects[11,12].

Over time, this may have a negative impact on the selection of basketball players, the dissemination effect, and economic effects. Therefore, in terms of content homogeneity, the association and the event organizer can create original and diverse content such as behind-the-scenes stories, player interviews, and historical reviews to attract and maintain the interest of fans[11]. At the same time, in terms of expanding the overseas influence of the NBA, it can conduct surveys on different regional cultures and combine them with basketball to create interesting interactive content or videos for online promotion, thereby enhancing the global influence of the league[11,12].

In terms of expanding the fan effect and increasing the number of fans, the association and the event organizer can design interactive online activities such as online voting, guessing, and real-time interaction to enhance the participation of fans[11]. At the same time, it should not rely solely on online marketing strategies, but should effectively combine online and offline marketing, such as holding star training camps, encouraging players to participate in community activities and charity events, and promoting content through multiple channels, platforms, and angles[12]. The NBA and CBA, can try to expand the number of fans by adopting the form of cross-border joint matches, interactively explore the potential fans interested in basketball in other sports projects, and enhance the audience's sense of immersion through star promotion[10,11,12].

4. Summary

In summary, by analyzing the overall development trend of NBA and CBA events and basketball tournaments, it is found that network marketing has a great boosting role in increasing the revenue and profit of basketball tournaments, mainly because network marketing is conducive to expanding the popularity and influence of basketball tournaments. At the same time, with the addition of the star effect, more fans of stars began to understand their idols with the help of online marketing platforms, which brought higher heat to the basketball game. However, the problems of over-commercialization and content homogenization exist in the development of sports events and clubs in network marketing. Therefore, in the future, this paper will study how to balance the consumers' watching experience with the event organizers' income generation and create unique network marketing content for different basketball leagues, to help clubs and event organizers comprehensively enhance their influence through network marketing.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally, and their names were list in alphabetical order.

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