

Analysis of Marketing Strategies in China of Imported Small Household Appliances Based on Advertising Communication —— Taking Dyson Hair Dryer as an Example

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Abstract. The rise of China's economy and the improvement of people's living conditions have contributed to an increasing market demand for small home appliances in the nation. Importing companies face significant challenges when entering the Chinese market, necessitating meticulous and comprehensive marketing strategies, especially in the realm of advertising communication. The Dyson hair dryer, a domestically manufactured appliance, has attracted considerable consumer attention and attained noteworthy accomplishments within the Chinese market. The research findings indicate that Dyson's successful advertising communication strategy in the Chinese market stems from its use of innovative advertising formats, emotional brand positioning, and precise targeting of specific client categories. This study uses a thorough research methodology, including comparison analysis, case analysis, and other techniques, to investigate the effectiveness and influence of Dyson's advertising communication strategy in the Chinese market. We use secondary data to conduct relevant qualitative analysis. The aforementioned study serves as a great asset in shaping the marketing strategy for imported small home appliances in the Chinese market. Moreover, it functions as a valuable point of reference and source of inspiration for forthcoming marketing strategies for analogous products.

Keywords: Advertising communication; Import brand brand development; Communication strategy; Marketing; Competitive Strategies of Multinational Enterprises.

1. Introduction

A growing number of nations are witnessing the expansion of various imported small household appliance companies in their daily lives. Furthermore, in the contemporary period, people gain an extensive amount of information through the Internet, including various topics such as people, culture, commerce, and the interconnected world. The Chinese market is experiencing an increasing demand for imported small household equipment. To take advantage of this trend, import enterprises must develop effective marketing tactics to attract Chinese consumers and distinguish themselves in the fiercely competitive market. Advertising communication is an essential element of marketing strategy since it has a central function in enhancing product awareness, influencing brand perception, and stimulating sales growth.

However, China has a significant number of imported small home appliances that have not yet achieved success in becoming global firms. Rather, larger companies have attempted to penetrate new markets but have been unsuccessful. On the other hand, Dyson has achieved a certain level of success in the Chinese market. Furthermore, Dyson has achieved remarkable success in the Chinese market, surpassing certain domestic Chinese competitors to get a greater portion of the market. Hence, it is crucial to analyse the marketing strategy employed by Dyson as a foreign small household appliance brand in China.

Established in 1991, Dyson is a British company specializing in the production of household goods and industrial machinery. The company received recognition for its innovative Hoover cleaning products. During its early stages, Dyson encountered intense competition from conventional home appliance manufacturers and resistance from the market towards new products. However, through persistent innovation and a strong market strategy, Dyson managed to overcome these challenges and



establish itself as a globally renowned brand. The study revealed that Dyson's astute commercial communication strategy facilitated the effective promotion of the Dyson hair dryer in the Chinese market.

The thesis will be structured into two distinct sections: the theoretical component and the practical component. The theoretical component will include an examination of Dyson's marketing theory, the 4Ps, and an exploration of how the SWOT analysis model operates on Dyson, contributing to the brand's success. The practical component will involve a thorough analysis of actual situations and data, drawing comparisons between Dyson and its competitors. The data is obtained from various sources, such as the Internet, online books, and written scientific literature.

This paper uses a review study as the overarching structure for the research, intending to carefully examine and analyse the existing research findings in a particular topic or field. We employ the case analysis approach to illustrate theoretical perspectives or analytical findings through specific cases or examples, which helps readers understand the research topic more intuitively. Furthermore, the article uses secondary data for pertinent analysis and conducts a quantitative or qualitative analysis of the study subject using current data resources.

Apart from presenting a concise overview of Dyson Hair Dryers' marketing strategies and triumphs in the Chinese market, this research offers valuable insights and suggestions for other global small household appliance manufacturers. Conducting extensive research on the marketing strategies of imported small household appliances in the Chinese market can provide valuable insights into effective advertising communication practices. This, in turn, can enhance the competitiveness of brands in the Chinese market and stimulate industry development and marketing innovation.

2. Overview of Dyson and Its Marketing in China

2.1. Background Information of Dyson

Dyson first established a flagship store in China in 2006, marking the company's debut in the Chinese market. Nevertheless, Dyson's entry into the Chinese market has not been without its difficulties and modifications. During its initial phase, Dyson faced numerous challenges in the Chinese market, such as limited customer receptiveness towards premium items, intense market rivalry, and inadequate brand recognition among consumers.

In 2008, Dyson ceased operations in the mainland market and exclusively established a presence in the Hong Kong market through Jebson. Nevertheless, Dyson remains determined to progressively penetrate the Chinese market by consistently enhancing product quality and raising brand recognition. In 2012, after a period of four years, Dyson made its official reentry into the Chinese market. In 2014, the company opened multiple outlets in China, with earnings being the primary determinant. Nevertheless, Dyson's foray into the Chinese market did not generate significant commotion and interest until the introduction of the Supersonic hair dryer in China in 2016.

Due to China's booming economy and the expanding middle class, there has been a progressive increase in the demand for top-notch and cutting-edge home appliances among customers. Due to its distinctive product design and superior technological advantages, along with effective advertising and media exposure, Dyson has progressively built a strong brand reputation in the Chinese market and has garnered a loyal customer base. During that period, Dyson's personal care (PC) product line started gaining significant attention in China. Furthermore, China individually contributed approximately \$10 billion in water flows in 2019. Dyson has introduced a range of tailored products and services specifically designed for Chinese consumers to better cater to their market demands. For instance, Dyson has specifically designed a range of household equipment, such as vacuum cleaners and air purifiers, to meet the unique characteristics and requirements of Chinese households. Furthermore, Dyson has introduced small initiatives in the WeChat app to provide tailored post-purchase assistance and client care.

As the Chinese market continues to grow and Dyson's presence in China expands, the sales network of Dyson in China has also been expanding, reaching more cities and regions. Dyson actively participates in China's science and technology innovation ecosystem, collaborating with Chinese research institutions, universities, and industries to collectively advance science and technology innovation and industrial development.

Overall, we can view Dyson's expansion into the Chinese market as a consistent journey of discovery and adaptation, marked by overcoming several obstacles, enhancing product excellence, fortifying brand establishment, and gradually gaining the acknowledgment and confidence of Chinese consumers.

2.2. Marketing Strategy of Dyson Hair Dryer

2.2.1. The Marketing Theory of the 4Ps.

The Marketing-Mix strategy, sometimes referred to as the 4Ps, pertains to the elements of product, pricing, location, and promotion. An organization concentrates on two sorts of strategic activities to develop a marketing mix. The initial step involves choosing the market in which the firm aims to enter, while the subsequent step entails the construction of the 4Ps framework, which integrates all elements of the marketing mix, including price, place, product, and promotion, in order to meet consumer satisfaction [1]. As a high-end electrical product that subverts traditional design, Dyson hair dryer has attracted much attention in the market. From the perspective of the 4Ps, Dyson hair dryer has shown its unique value and competitive advantage.

1) Product

Products refer to goods or services that are introduced into the market for consumption or usage by customers in order to fulfill their requirements and desires [2]. Alternatively, Hirankitti, Mechinda, and Manjing propose a different perspective on the definition of a product. They argue that the concept of a service as a product is grounded in two key features. The first service is characterized by its high productivity and ability to showcase fundamental advantages. The second service, on the other hand, comprises concrete and augmented offerings at a secondary level. The latter pertains to the provision of essential services [1]. Dyson hair dryers utilize cutting-edge bladeless fan technology to revolutionize the conventional design of hair dryers, resulting in enhanced noise reduction, improved efficiency, and a gentle drying process that minimizes hair damage. The Dyson hair dryer's shape design is simultaneously elegant and straightforward, catering to the aesthetic preferences of contemporary consumers and enhancing the product's allure and usability. The first service characteristic of the product encompasses these exceptional qualities, while the second service characteristic includes Dyson's after-sales support and warranty supplied to its consumers.

2) Price

Price refers to the monetary amount that is levied for the provision of a service or product to a consumer. The price has a substantial influence on the psychology of customers and plays a crucial role in their decision to repurchase a product [3]. Positioned in the high-end market, Dyson hair dryers carry a relatively high price tag. However, this is matched with its advanced technology, high-quality materials, and excellent performance, reflecting the high quality and high added value of the product, which attracts consumers who pursue a quality life. The cost of Dyson hair dryers is mostly determined by its sophisticated technology, groundbreaking design, and premium-grade materials. Dyson hair dryers, being a premium product, typically command a higher price point. Philips and Panasonic, which are other premium brands that rival Dyson hair dryers, have similar pricing points. These businesses similarly prioritize technological innovation and quality, although their prices are slightly lower compared to Dyson. On the other hand, China's mass-produced hair dryers are typically more cost-effective, making them a great choice for consumers with constrained budgets. While they may be affordable, these products distinguish themselves from Dyson and other luxury brands in terms of their performance and design.

3) Place

The notion of position refers to a product's accessibility to a consumer [2]. However, the notion of place extends beyond Armstrong's and Kotler's definition, as Hirankitti et al [1]. Argue that it encompasses not only physical location but also distribution networks. The distribution facilities and location play a crucial role in meeting the demand and supply of a product and overcoming obstacles that impede the supply of a product to a certain market [1]. Dyson hair dryers are distributed through various avenues, including brick-and-mortar stores and online e-commerce platforms, catering to diverse consumer segments. Furthermore, Dyson has collaborated with select luxury retailers and exclusive distributors to broaden the market reach of their products and enhance their brand exposure and impact.

4) Promotion

Promotion refers to the act of publicizing a product to potential buyers in order to facilitate its sale. This process involves communicating with customers through various advertising channels. Promotion primarily aims to minimize the communication barrier that arises between an organization and its customers [4]. Strategic efforts aim to capitalize on media advertising opportunities to effectively engage with customers and entice them to purchase the company's products [1]. Dyson conducts advertising and media promotion through advertisements on various platforms, promotional activities, and online social media. Through celebrity endorsements and product experience activities, Dyson successfully established its brand image, increased consumer awareness and favorable impressions of the product, and promoted sales growth. In addition, Dyson has implemented purchasing, customer service, information sharing, customer relationship management, and other functions in China's official WeChat public account [5].

Based on the above analysis, the Dyson hair dryer has demonstrated strong performance in product design, pricing strategy, sales channels, marketing promotion, and other relevant areas. This performance directly affects customer satisfaction and loyalty, and it indirectly affects product sales. As shown in the following figure 1.

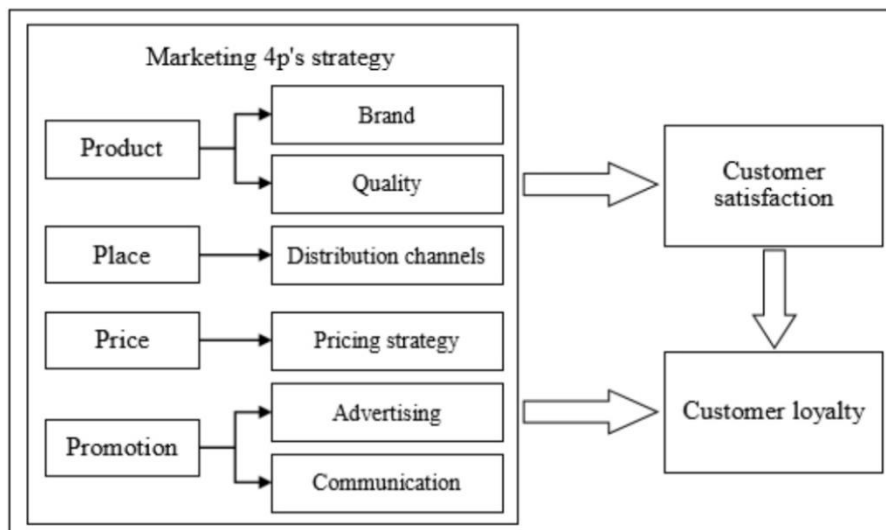


Figure 1. The effect of Marketing 4p's strategy on customers

This is why Dyson hair dryers can win the favor of consumers and gain market recognition in the Chinese market. Due to increasing customer demand for healthy lifestyles and premium products, Dyson hair dryers are projected to continue their dominant position in a fiercely competitive industry and achieve significant market share and performance growth.

2.2.2. The SWOT analysis model.

The SWOT analysis is a method that involves examining the internal and external competitive environment and conditions to identify the primary internal strengths, weaknesses, external

opportunities, and threats associated with Dyson Hair Dryer. We then organize these factors in a matrix format and systematically analyze them to determine their interrelationships [6].

1) Strengths

Dyson, a prestigious global luxury home appliance business, has successfully built a solid reputation and positive consumer impression by effectively utilizing social media for brand awareness. This is crucial for attracting affluent consumer segments due to their strong brand loyalty. Dyson's hairdryers utilize cutting-edge digital motor technology and air multiplier technology, establishing themselves as trailblazers in the realm of high-speed hair dryers. Dyson goods are renowned for their sophisticated design and superior craftsmanship, distinguishing their hairdryer items in the market [7].

2) Weaknesses

Dyson's products are expensive, which limits their potential client base because of their premium pricing. With a restricted portion of the market, although Dyson is a renowned brand, its market share in the Chinese market for small home appliances and personal care products, including hairdryers, is rather limited. Reliance on Key Markets Currently, Dyson's primary source of profit in China remains a single product, which poses the risk of making the entire company's profit source dependent and unresponsive.

3) Opportunities

Opportunities Within the context of new product development, Dyson possesses a formidable technical team, which grants them a competitive advantage in the research and development of innovative products. In the Chinese market, invest more in emerging popular products, such as floor washing machines. Dyson's exceptional after-sales service is unparalleled in the home appliance industry, making its higher prices more justifiable. Enhancing brand loyalty and attracting consumers who prioritize product dependability and assistance, this strategy positions Dyson as a high-end option in a very competitive sector [8].

4) Threats

Threats Dyson encounters intense rivalry in the home appliance and personal care areas, which poses a significant challenge. Dyson's hairdryers have ignited intense competition in the Chinese hairdryer market, prompting competitors such as Laifen and Dreame to develop competitively priced devices that deliver performance on par with Dyson's. Dyson may struggle to keep pace with emerging trends and sustain its competitive advantage due to the rapidity of technological advancements.

3. Advertising Communication Analysis of Dyson

3.1. Building Awareness

Trust is the fundamental quality of the goods, while the brand serves as its emblem. The shared characteristics of products define the brand's essence and scope, representing a unique value that exists separate from the product itself. During the instructional process, the repeated VI design and product information will serve as a symbolic representation of product attributes, bringing them together in a balanced manner. Dyson's advertisements from 2012 to 2013 exhibited distinct personality traits, predominantly utilizing shades of gray, white, and other colors as the primary color scheme. The advertisements strategically positioned the product at the center of the visual composition, showcasing its performance, technology, and usage scenarios through intricate special effects. Additionally, the advertisements sought to establish a professional image by highlighting the extensive patent portfolio associated with the brand. The human-centered extreme object experience allows the spectator to form their first impression of the product. The audience develops a sense of confidence in the product. The audience associates the product with the "Dyson" brand by using the featured logo at the start and finish of the campaign, thereby signifying the trajectory it follows.

3.2. Enhance the Distinction and Fortify the Brand

The promotion of a brand is a lengthy and intricate process of establishing its independent significance and enhancing the value it adds to the product. This process encompasses long-term strategic planning and a focus on the brand's essence and values. Dyson understands the impact of repeated exposure on customers' thoughts and uses ongoing brand symbol communication to establish a pathway for significance accumulation, thereby attributing symbolic value in culture to the brand. Between 2014 and 2018, Dyson implemented an extensive advertising campaign in the Chinese market, resulting in a significant boost in product visibility and enhancing the brand's importance. Dyson launched a hair dryer advertisement in 2017, departing from its previous minimalist style and focusing on women as the primary target audience. It addressed the everyday challenges and overlooked details in women's lives, emphasizing the brand's new technological features that enhance women's experiences and help them discover moments of radiance. Despite the frequent depiction of women in commercials, there is a dearth of products specifically designed to meet their needs. The amalgamation of brand significance with feminine symbolism not only holds societal worth but also effectively establishes a connection with the target consumer base, endowing Dyson with the position of a female protector and nurturing the emotional bond, hence reinforcing the brand's significance. Transitioning from a logical and somewhat detached "geek product" to a compassionate and effective "pain point solver". The advertisement enhances the spiritual aspect of the "material" in the "product power," establishes a "humanized" brand image, and showcases the Dyson brand's social worth.

4. Deficiencies and Improvements in the Future Market

4.1. Slow Growth in Market Share of Dyson Hair Dryers

1) Price Discrepancy with Target Market: The initial period of growth spurred by filling the gap for high-speed hair dryers has concluded. In China, Dyson's primary consumer base, the rational middle-class, values a balance between quality and cost-effectiveness. Given the relatively high price of Dyson hair dryers, their market competitiveness appears somewhat diminished. This consumer segment exhibits prudent spending habits, which are not well-aligned with the premium pricing of Dyson products [9].

2) Emergence of Comparable Competitors: The Chinese market has witnessed the introduction of numerous high-speed hair dryers priced between 300 to 1000 RMB, which has led to a fragmentation of Dyson's market share. These products are effectively competing with Dyson by offering similar functionalities at more accessible price points. See the diagram below for a detailed comparison [9] (Fig 2).

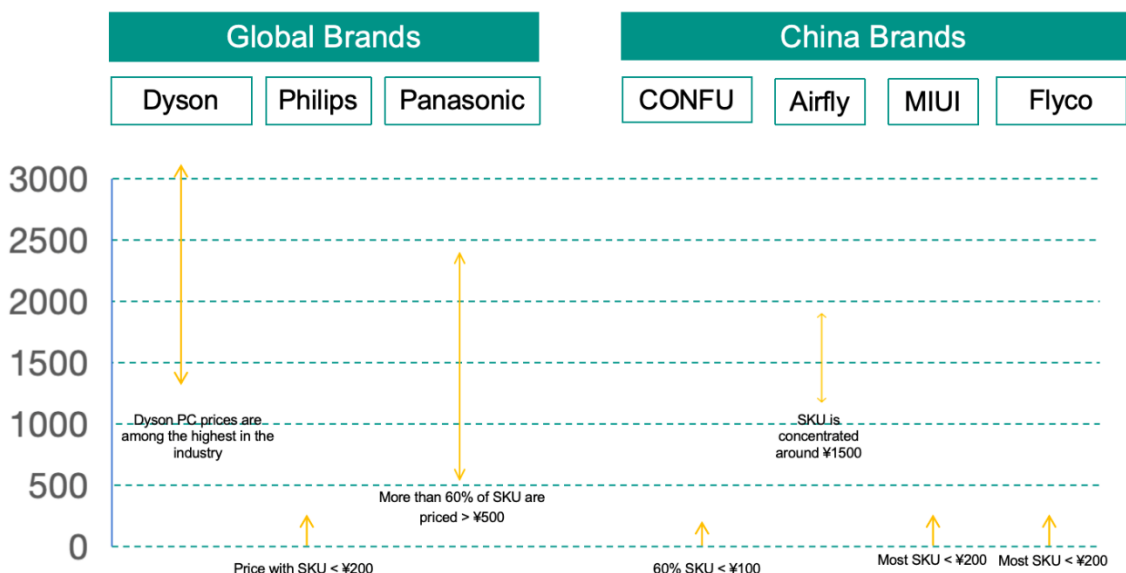


Figure 2. Price comparison of Dyson and rival products

3) **Lack of Localized Marketing Strategies:** In China, the livestream e-commerce sector is highly profitable. However, Dyson only initiated its livestreaming channels on Douyin's e-commerce platform in November 2022. Its performance metrics in livestreaming (such as the number of sales events, units sold, profit, and viewership) have been substantially lower compared to its competitors. Furthermore, Dyson has not allocated sufficient resources for influencer marketing on social media platforms such as Douyin and Xiaohongshu. For instance, as per the comparative analytics data from Douyin's e-commerce platform from March 2023 to March 2024, Dyson's livestream sales ratio accounted for only 61.03%, while its competitors reached 72.16% and 82.50%. In terms of influencer marketing, Dyson has shown a preference for engaging with potential and mid-tier influencers, thereby missing out on the market share of top-tier influencers.

4.2. The Development Strategy of Imported Small Household Appliances

1) Price strategy

Take Dyson for example, Dyson's target market includes China's middle and wealthy classes. However, relying solely on the high-end consumer segment has not enabled Dyson to significantly expand its market share in recent years. Therefore, imported small appliances can broaden the diversity of product prices within a certain range, which can compete more effectively with other brands while maintaining Dyson's high-end brand image and attracting wealthy markets. This strategy aims to expand the market share of imported small household appliances and enhance their competitive advantage.

2) Advertising marketing

Different e-commerce platforms have different gameplay attributes, and the two platforms with the largest consumption volume in the Chinese market are Taobao and Tiktok. The main consumer groups on Taobao are those who have the corresponding brand purchase experience. TikTok, on the other hand, uses short videos to promote emotional value and consumption. TikTok's consumers naturally have expectations about reading interests, content, and stories, as well as the viability of narrative marketing. This also explains why Dyson's rival "Laifan" can become the king of Tiktok but can't put the same video material on Taobao e-commerce and replicate the miraculous success. Therefore, different e-commerce platforms need to use different types of advertising for brand communication, which can get twice the result with half the effort.

5. Conclusion

China's media communication and traffic are undergoing a significant transformation. The advent of media communication has significantly altered customers' perceptions of products and companies, while the rise of traffic has revolutionized the effectiveness of reaching users. In less than ten years of establishing a presence in China, Dyson quickly went from being somewhat unknown to becoming highly recognized and influential. Essentially, Dyson has successfully transitioned from a product to a brand, with its development closely linked to its advertising strategy. Dyson's success serves as a source of inspiration for the development of imported small household appliances in China. Imported small household appliance brands must consider a wide range of price positioning and ensure different pricing options. However, if small appliances imported from other countries wish to penetrate the Chinese market, the brand must ensure that their advertising material resonates strongly with the target audience and tailor their advertising strategies to suit the preferences of different e-commerce platforms. Use media influence to cultivate a positive user experience and insight users' inclination to make purchases.

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