

Research on ASUS's Marketing Strategy in China

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Abstract. Asus, as the world's leading manufacturer of computer motherboards and laptops, its subsidiary brand ROG has faced the challenge of declining profit growth in recent years. In today's world, digital marketing is already the key to growth. ROG has shown different digital marketing strategies in different regions. This article reveals ASUS's digital marketing strategies in the Chinese market through literature review and case analysis. By analyzing ROG's digital marketing strategy, this article explores the advantages and disadvantages of ROG's digital marketing strategy and proposes targeted suggestions. ROG currently has mature strategies and systems in search engine marketing and display marketing, but it does not pay enough attention to the characteristics of different social media platforms and user group preferences in social media marketing, resulting in poor marketing effects. By improving user profiles and increasing the relevance of marketing, it helps to improve the effectiveness of social media marketing. At the same time, the allocation of marketing budgets should be adjusted to increase ROG's return on investment, further improving ROG's overall digital marketing effectiveness.

Keywords: ROG, The Chinese digital market, Digital marketing.

1. Introduction

Asus is an electronic technology company primarily engaged in the production of motherboards, founded in Taiwan in 1989. With the rise of personal mobile electronic devices, Asus seized the opportunity and expanded into the notebook segment. To date, Asus has become one of the leading global producers of laptop computers, not only manufacturing laptops but also undertaking manufacturing orders for other brands. At the same time, Asus has become one of the top three consumer laptop brands in the world, ranking second in market share in the Chinese market. In 2016, Asus sold 19.7 million computer motherboards and 19.3 million laptops, generating over 120 billion RMB in revenue through desktop computer components and the laptop industry, and officially entering the ranks of the Fortune 500 companies.

China is an important market for Asus in Asia. According to Asus's revenue data, in 2023, Asus's revenue in Asia accounted for 45% of total revenue, while the share in China is expected to increase to 14%. With the rapid rise of computer gaming and the expansion of the laptop market, Asus officially entered the field of gaming laptops in 2006, launching the ROG G1 and G2 series. In 2008, Asus has been developing the blue ocean market for top gamers since 2006, gradually establishing its own high-end brand—Asus ROG (Republic of Gamers) gaming computers. As the name suggests, it is dedicated to serving gamers. The entire team is committed to creating unprecedented gaming devices. They have formed an independent business unit, achieving unprecedented freedom in technology application and resource requirements [1].

Furthermore, ASUS has always adhered to the concept of technology marketing. It is not difficult to see from the rapid development and achievements of ASUS that the past approach of technology marketing was indeed suitable for the company's growth. However, it is this traditional inclination towards the hardware manufacturing field that has led ASUS to not excel and achieve only average results in areas such as brand management, content production, and marketing. This also affected the development of ROG. There is no doubt that the new media era has arrived. The development of new media technologies such as WeChat, Weibo, Tictok, and Yingke has already begun to deeply influence consumers' consumption behaviors today. Digital technology, media, and marketing are changing the landscape of how brands interact with consumers. Given the power of digital marketing in expanding customer reach and enhancing profitability, brands cannot afford to ignore its use.

Therefore, the research question of this paper is ROG's digital marketing strategy in the Chinese market. In the first part, the environment of digital marketing in China is analyzed. In the second part, ROG's digital marketing strategy in China is analyzed. In the last part, the improvement measures and future prospects of ROG's digital marketing strategy in China are summarized and briefly analyzed. Through the literature survey method, it is possible to deeply understand ROG's specific digital marketing strategies under the current business environment and the status quo of the digital marketing market in China. Through the use of case study analysis, the characteristics and shortcomings of ROG's digital marketing can be analyzed, in order to deduce its strategy adjustment plans and possible future development. This is beneficial for helping ROG design marketing communication strategies suitable for the Chinese market, and for maintaining and acquiring customers in fierce market competition.

2. Analysis of the Chinese Digital Marketing Market

According to statistics, in 2022, the scale of China's internet effective audience exceeded 780 million, still in a phase of rapid development. Also, the internet advertising industry market size in China reached 573.2 billion yuan in 2023, with the number of internet users reaching 1.0996 billion, and the internet penetration rate reaching 76.4%. The rapidly growing market holds a multitude of opportunities, and the number of search engine users has reached 673 million, making search marketing the most effective marketing tool. In the Chinese market, the search engine market is mainly led by Baidu. According to existing data, Baidu and Google have occupied nearly 80% of the search engine users in China. Baidu's user penetration rate exceeded 95% in 2023, and its monthly active users account for 88% of mobile users. Display marketing, also an important part of the digital marketing market, has become increasingly flexible with the support of information technology, capable of appearing almost anywhere on the internet. The combination of display marketing and search marketing forms the basic model of China's digital marketing market [2].

In China, apart from search engines, social media is the absolute powerhouse of the digital marketing market. Social media users in China have exceeded 1 billion, with monthly active users growing by 15%. The vast number of social media users and the developed e-commerce industry provide new opportunities for social media marketing. Interactive advertising and KOL marketing on social media platforms are currently emerging advertising methods and are also favored by many consumers. Notably, social media in China is increasingly trending towards search engines, for example, platforms like Xiaohongshu, similar to Instagram, and TikTok are continuously capturing customers from search engines led by Baidu. In 2024, Xiaohongshu's daily search volume reached 300 million times, with user engagement growth tripling since 2023 [3,4].

Finally, the revenue share of internet advertising across different platform types also reflects the changes in the internet advertising market. The share of social media platforms is quickly catching up with search engine platforms, reaching 8.98%. These phenomena indicate that beyond search marketing and display marketing, social media holds tremendous potential. From 2022 to 2023, the combined advertising revenue of video and short video platforms has already reached 143.308 billion yuan, becoming the second-largest channel type for internet advertisers to place their ads, and still maintaining rapid growth, with a share of 25%, far exceeding the revenue share of search marketing at 9% [2]. These social media platforms are actively undergoing commercial transformation, coupled with the growing strength of e-commerce giants such as JD.com and Alibaba, the advertising revenue of e-commerce platforms has reached 207.06 billion yuan. These platforms provide enterprises with a variety of marketing channels, allowing businesses to directly access a vast number of potential customers.

Artificial intelligence also plays a significant role in China's digital marketing, greatly assisting the personalized recommendation systems of search engines and various online platforms. For instance, generative AI can collect user data to customize advertising delivery processes for clients and optimize marketing strategies [5].

3. ROG's Digital Marketing Strategy in the Chinese Market

ROG's marketing strategy is divided into traditional media marketing and new media marketing. Even though ROG is influenced by ASUS's traditional pragmatic product power marketing strategy, due to ROG's inherent e-sports attributes and the young customer base it targets, it is necessary to leverage the advantages of new media and the internet. At present, ROG has already established a certain level of digital marketing system. This study mainly analyzes ROG's digital marketing strategy from three aspects: search engine marketing, display marketing, and social media marketing.

3.1. Search Marketing Strategies

3.1.1. Web

The Chinese website of ROG is a typical Chinese section of a multinational corporation's website, with its main content largely the same as the main Asian website of ASUS. It mainly includes product exhibitions, brand news information, promotional videos, and services such as software and hardware support. The website uses a .com.cn domain name and employs HTTPS encryption to ensure the information security of users and the website.

3.1.2. Introduction to Search Engine Marketing Strategies

In terms of search engines, ROG began to officially carry out search engine marketing as an independent region in China around 2014, with Baidu and Bing as the core optimization targets, supplemented by Google, 360, and Sogou search ranking effects. The main methods include SEO, SEM, and technical transformations.

In terms of SEO and technical transformation, the ROG China regional homepage has very comprehensive content. The website has initially set up a relatively comprehensive arrangement of keywords, meaning that keywords are reasonably arranged and used within the web page. This makes it easier for search engines to recognize the theme of the ROG web page, improving the visibility of the webpage when searching for relevant keywords. At the same time, ROG has implemented pseudo-static URLs and optimized internal website links. On one hand, this has improved the results of search engine optimization, and on the other hand, it has enhanced the browsing experience for users. It allows users to feel comfortable and convenient when searching and browsing the content of the website, which helps to increase the number of times and duration users stay on the webpage, thus improving the conversion rate.

In terms of SEM, ROG has chosen Baidu and New Bing as the main core search channels, with Google Search, 360 Search, and other engines as auxiliary channels. They frequently conduct algorithm monitoring and data detection to optimize their search engine marketing effectiveness.

3.2. Display Marketing Strategies

In terms of advertising, ROG's strategy is similar to that of most advertisers, mainly cooperating with well-known websites, e-commerce platforms, and social media platforms, such as Zhihu, Taobao, JD.com, Tictok, and Bilibili, among others. On websites, ROG primarily uses banner ads displayed at the top, bottom and sides of web pages, featuring static or dynamic content. Additionally, on certain high-tech pages, ROG employs interactive ads that allow users to engage with the content, such as virtual reality experiences. On e-commerce and visual media platforms, ROG targets specific users with tailored content based on collected user data, with formats including images, videos, and carousel ads. Furthermore, ROG has also implemented mobile-friendly ad designs (to fit mobile devices), personalized retargeting ads for individual users, and some native advertising.

3.3. Social Media Marketing Strategies

3.3.1. Overview of ROG's Social Media Marketing

In 2019, ROG's China region officially became an independent operating entity and subsequently launched content on various platforms such as WeChat on January 31, 2019, Bilibili on January 3,

Weibo, Tictok on June 12, 2018, and Xiaohongshu on May 19, 2020, engaging in social media marketing activities. ROG's marketing on social media platforms is quite diverse, but there are significant differences in the time of entry across different platforms, and the marketing effects vary greatly. For instance, ROG entered Tictok and Bilibili relatively early, with a large number of followers and a high volume of content uploads, resulting in high view counts; whereas on Xiaohongshu, ROG entered later, and despite having a substantial number of submissions, the results are mediocre, with many contents having click-through rates of less than 10 people. For the convenience of research, this article chooses the content and data from Bilibili and Tictok for study.

Table 1. The data of ROG's social media accounts

	Fans	Post	Like	Over ten thousand likes	Highest single content click-through rate
Tictok	94.7w	1173	876.1w	198	40.3w
BiliBili	40.7	400	197w	4	50.2w

As shown in table 1, the data from ROG on TikTok and Bilibili is evident that ROG has the most followers on TikTok, reaching 980,000; Bilibili follows with 630,000 fans. Both platforms target younger demographics. On Bilibili, ROG has uploaded 400 videos, with 2 videos reaching over 10,000 likes and 278 videos with over 10,000 views. On TikTok, ROG has uploaded 537 videos, with 198 videos reaching over 10,000 likes and 312 videos with over 10,000 views. The videos with the highest combined data on Bilibili and TikTok are the ROG 4090 series graphics card launch video and a female streamer's cosplay video, respectively, showing different user preferences for content on various social media platforms. What is concerning is that on TikTok, content with high engagement is often not strongly related to the product but rather involves memes or loosely related videos. Even though these contents may have good traffic, they do not tend to have much conversion effect.

At the same time, ROG frequently produces various brand short films and actively collaborates with other brands, shaping a high-end and cool brand image. Coupled with its extremely high product performance, it has gradually earned the nickname "Expensive Eyes" and has become an important player in the gaming laptop market, representing high-performance laptops. Overall, content related to new products released on social media and brand promotional videos with higher production values tend to receive more attention, reflecting consumers' focus on performance, individuality, and brand culture.

4. Enhancement and Outlook of ROG's Digital Marketing Strategy in China

4.1. Current Status of Marketing Strategies

The increasing demand of Chinese gaming laptops, desktops, as well as the rapid growth of the computer hardware and peripherals market, has been seen. ROG, as a brand under the traditional hardware manufacturer ASUS, needs to find a good balance between the rigorous manufacturing tradition and the Z Generation's demand for radical innovation and outstanding performance. It also faces a host of competitors. The solution to this predicament is powerful marketing; ROG needs to connect more closely with users and players. ROG's solution is to retain consumers with top-tier products, and as a result, the prices are much higher than those of many competitors. However, when players are seeking the ultimate experience and have sufficient budget, they are willing to pay a premium for ROG's products. ROG has naturally earned the nickname "The Eye of Profligacy." With its outstanding products and performance, along with appropriate marketing, ROG has consistently remained at the forefront of the laptop market.

4.2. In-depth Shaping of Brand Image and Story

With the rise of various competitors and the increasing demand for expanding the customer base in the Chinese market, ROG's marketing may also need to change. On one hand, this involves repositioning its marketing strategy. Given its product philosophy and image of being "for gamers" and "gaming," even though its performance and productivity are fully capable of competing with products known for productivity, such as Apple, some business professionals or customers who need to use computers in important/work situations would hardly choose ROG products. This is because the ROG brand lacks storytelling, overemphasizing performance, which sometimes fails to resonate with consumers. It is essential to create a variety of short films with storytelling elements to engage consumers. These films should showcase ROG's uniqueness and truly create emotional experiences, conveying the brand's philosophy, while also having the ability to appeal to a wide range of different consumers.

4.3. Marketing Strategy Optimization

ROG has invested in various marketing channels, but the differences between these channels can affect the effectiveness of marketing strategies. For example, ROG's account on Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book) has very poor data, despite having posted over 1300 pieces of content. The click-through rate for each piece is minimal, indicating that the marketing strategy on Xiaohongshu may need improvement. It could be beneficial to look at the currently popular KOL (Key Opinion Leader) model on Xiaohongshu. For potential customers on Xiaohongshu, the impact of opinion leaders might be more significant than that of official operational self-media. There is also the possibility that Xiaohongshu is not the best channel for marketing for a brand like ROG, which is more hardcore and closely related to e-sports or gaming. In such a case, it would be wise to adjust the marketing strategy for Xiaohongshu, either by reducing investment or changing the approach.

At the same time, for platforms like TikTok, which have high traffic but low user stickiness, it is appropriate to strengthen consumer guidance. For example, offering more discounts or promotional content and increasing investment in marketing models that encourage user-to-user transmission can be effective. On platforms like Bilibili, however, the focus should be on the quality and effectiveness of content. Investing more funds to increase the transmission and inheritance of brand and product storylines can help gain loyal customers.

4.4. Marketing Approaches Based on Market Feedback

In the new media era, the relationship between brands and consumers is no longer just about the brand launching products and consumers accepting them. Instead, it is about emotional communication between both parties, requiring users to be deeply involved in the design and production processes. The ASUS ROG brand needs to interact sincerely with fans through various new media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, forums, Tieba, and Zhihu. On one hand, it should convey the advantages and product features of the ASUS ROG brand from a professional technical perspective to the fans. On the other hand, it should directly understand the real needs of customers through interaction with fans and collect information to guide future product development.

5. Conclusion

Through research, this article explores the digital marketing strategies of ROG in the Chinese market, with specific cases in search engine marketing, display marketing, and social media marketing. The study found that ROG, as a subsidiary brand of ASUS, tends to be conservative in its digital marketing strategies and lacks adjustments to the characteristics of the Chinese digital marketing industry and the internet, which can be seen from the following points. Firstly, in terms of search engine marketing, ROG has a relatively well-established homepage for its China region, but focuses on product display without much content to enhance brand image and user engagement and sense of belonging. In terms of display advertising marketing, ROG does not have a special marketing

strategy, and the types of advertisements it delivers are not much different from those of its competitors. In terms of social media marketing, ROG has invested in major mainstream social media platforms in the Chinese market, but has not achieved good results on individual platforms. The reason is that it has not created marketing content tailored to the specific attributes of the platforms and the preferences of the user groups, so it has not gained traffic preferences from the platforms or the favor of users, which is particularly evident on platforms like Xiaohongshu. Based on the above points, this study proposes improved marketing strategies for ROG in the Chinese market, such as increasing investment in community operations, enhancing the brand image and influence through storytelling brand promotion, and addressing the issue of weak brand power in the business sector. ROG also needs to optimize investments across different marketing channels, such as reducing or refining marketing strategies on Xiaohongshu, targeting personalized advertising towards consumers on Bilibili, and on platforms like TikTok, which have a larger number of budget-conscious consumers, offering more promotional content rather than entertainment content.

Finally, this survey somewhat lacks the perspective of consumers themselves on ROG's consumption strategy, which leads to a lack of understanding of consumers' true feelings about the actual marketing effects of ROG. Future research could delve deeper into this aspect, such as using questionnaire surveys or interviews, which would certainly lead to a deeper understanding of ROG's marketing strategy in China and provide more constructive suggestions.

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