

The Psychological Mechanism of Consumer Brand Recall and Its Influence on Brand Loyalty

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ABSTRACT

Based on consumer behavior theory, this study explores the psychological mechanism of brand recall and its impact on brand loyalty through methods such as literature research and case analysis. By sorting out relevant literature to construct a theoretical framework and combining with case studies, it is found that the formation of brand recall is influenced by three dimensions: cognition, emotion, and social culture. The cognitive dimension involves information encoding, storage, and retrieval; the emotional dimension reflects the enhancement of memory by the emotional value of the brand; the social and cultural dimension reflects the shaping of brand memory by regional culture and social circles. The study confirms that there is a positive correlation between brand recall and brand loyalty, and emotionally driven brand recall plays a more significant role in improving loyalty. This research improves the theory of consumer behavior, provides a theoretical basis and practical guidance for corporate brand management, and also offers a new perspective for understanding the psychological mechanism of consumer behavior.

KEYWORDS

Brand recall; Psychological mechanism; Brand loyalty; Consumer behavior

1 Introduction

1.1 Research background

With the development of the digital economy and the integration of the global market, market competition has become increasingly fierce. Brands, as an important part of an enterprise's core competitiveness, play a crucial role in the development of enterprises. In daily life, when consumers choose and purchase goods, they are exposed to a large amount of brand information. For example, there are many brands in the carbonated beverage section of supermarkets, but when consumers actually make a purchase, the first ones that come to mind are often leading brands such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola. This ability to quickly recall brand information is called brand recall, which affects consumers' purchasing decisions and also determines an enterprise's market share and brand development. If enterprises want to succeed in the competition, they need to study the psychological mechanism of brand recall and its impact on brand loyalty.

1.2 Research significance

Theoretically, there are deficiencies in the existing research on the psychological mechanism of brand recall and the relationship between brand recall and brand loyalty. This study can fill the gaps in the theory of consumer behavior, promote the development of the theory, and provide new ideas for subsequent research. In practice, the research conclusions can help enterprises formulate brand communication strategies and improve customer loyalty. By understanding the mechanism and impact of brand recall, enterprises can better build and manage their brands and optimize their marketing methods. For researchers, carrying out this research can help them master academic research methods, deepen their understanding and application of marketing theories, cultivate research capabilities and critical thinking, and lay a foundation for future development.

1.3 Research objectives

(1) Integrate and analyze existing research results to construct a comprehensive and scientific theoretical model of consumers' brand recall psychological mechanism, explaining the relationship between various elements in the formation of brand recall.

(2) Use scientific methods to reveal the specific path through which brand recall affects brand loyalty, and clarify the role of brand recall in different dimensions in improving loyalty.

(3) Based on the research conclusions and combined with the actual situation of enterprises, put forward feasible strategies to improve brand loyalty based on brand recall, helping enterprises enhance brand value and market competitiveness.

2 Literature review

2.1 Concept and measurement of brand recall

In academic research, brand recall refers to consumers' ability to actively recall brand-related information through their own memory without external prompts, reflecting consumers' cognition and memory of the brand. At present, the measurement methods of brand recall mainly include free recall and cued recall. Free recall requires consumers to name as many brands of a certain product category as possible without the help of prompts, such as naming the mobile phone brands they know. Cued recall provides clues to let consumers recall relevant brands, for example, giving "with optical image stabilization function" to let consumers name the corresponding mobile phone brands. These two methods evaluate brand recall ability from different angles, complement each other, and provide effective tools for research.

2.2 Research on the psychological mechanism of brand recall

(1) Cognitive dimension: According to cognitive psychology, the formation of brand recall includes information encoding, storage, and retrieval. During encoding, consumers receive brand information through senses such as vision and hearing, such as Apple's LOGO and Intel's sound effect. In the storage stage, the encoded information exists in long-term memory in the form of a semantic network, associated with information such as product characteristics and prices. During consumption, environmental cues will trigger memory retrieval. For example, in a mobile phone store, cues such as the in-store environment will remind people of different mobile phone brands.

(2) Emotional dimension: The emotional value contained in a brand affects consumers' recall of the brand. Consumers will have emotional experiences when purchasing and using products. Haagen-Dazs connects the brand with romance, so that consumers will think of related emotions when recalling the brand, making the brand more profound in memory. Brand after-sales service and word-of-mouth also affect emotional experience and brand recall.

(3) Social dimension: Social culture and social circles affect brand memory. Regional culture makes consumers prefer local brands, such as Chongqing people's love for "Qiaotou" hot pot base. In the era of social networks, the influence of social circles is significant. Pop Mart is popular among trendy toy lovers, establishing brand memory through social communication, and consumers' social interactions can change their cognition and memory of the brand.

2.3 Research status of brand loyalty

Brand loyalty refers to consumers' continuous love for and repeated purchase of a specific brand, which is an indicator to measure consumers' trust and dependence on the brand. In research, brand loyalty is measured from two aspects: behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty. Behavioral loyalty is reflected by behaviors such as purchase frequency and amount; attitudinal loyalty focuses on consumers' emotional identity, willingness to recommend, and tolerance for negative information. Factors such as product quality and service level jointly affect brand loyalty. High-quality products and services can improve satisfaction and enhance loyalty; unique brand image and reasonable prices can attract consumers.

2.4 Research on the relationship between brand recall and brand loyalty

Existing studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between brand recall and brand loyalty. The clearer consumers' recall of a brand is, the more likely they are to repurchase and recommend it. However, in different product categories, the mechanism by which brand recall affects brand loyalty may be different. Fast-moving consumer goods are purchased frequently and decisions are made quickly, so consumers rely more on brand recall for selection; consumer durables are purchased cautiously, and the role of brand recall is relatively small. This difference needs further research. In addition, the specific path through which emotionally driven brand recall affects brand loyalty also needs to be further clarified.

3 Theoretical basis and research hypotheses

3.1 Theoretical basis

(1) Memory theory: The multi-store model divides human memory into sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory. Sensory memory has a short storage time, short-term memory has limited capacity and a short retention time, while long-term memory has a long storage time. Brand information can only be recalled during consumption if it enters long-term memory and is stored effectively, which provides theoretical support for understanding the formation of brand recall. Enterprises need to make information enter consumers' long-term memory when spreading brands.

(2) Consumer behavior theory: Consumers' purchasing decisions are affected by factors such as cognition, emotion, and environment. When purchasing, consumers first collect brand information, then analyze and evaluate to form a

cognitive attitude. Brand recall plays an intermediary role in decision-making, affecting information processing and emotional reactions. For example, if consumers recall the good experience of using a brand, they are more likely to purchase it.

(3) Brand equity theory: Brand equity is related to brand names and logos, which can affect the value of products and services. Brand recall is an important part of brand equity. Good brand recall can enhance consumers' cognitive recognition of the brand, make it easier for consumers to remember and choose the brand, improve the brand's market position, and promote the accumulation of brand equity.

3.2 Research hypotheses

Based on theoretical and literature analysis, three hypotheses are proposed:

H1: There is a positive correlation between brand recall intensity and brand loyalty; the stronger the recall, the higher the loyalty.

H2: Emotional brand recall has a more obvious impact on brand loyalty than cognitive brand recall.

H3: In the field of fast-moving consumer goods, brand recall has a greater impact on brand loyalty than in the field of durable goods.

4 Case analysis

4.1 Coca-cola: construction of emotional brand memory

Coca-Cola has established deep brand memory worldwide through brand vision and emotional marketing. Visually, the red logo and curved bottle design are highly recognizable. The red color conveys vitality, and the curved bottle design is unique and easy to identify. In terms of emotional marketing, the slogan "Taste the Feeling" connects the brand with pleasant emotions. Through advertising communication and sponsorship of events such as the Olympic Games, it strengthens emotional resonance and increases the cultural connotation of the brand. These strategies have left a deep impression of Coca-Cola in consumers' memory, transformed into purchase preferences and emotional dependence, established high brand loyalty, and achieved high market share and brand recall.

4.2 Huawei: technological innovation drives brand cognition

Huawei mobile phones have established stable brand cognition through technological innovation and brand positioning. Technologically, independently developed Kirin chips and HarmonyOS have improved chip performance and brought new experiences, establishing a leading position in technology. The brand positioning of "high-end and reliable" focuses on quality in product design, with excellent performance in photography and battery life. It also participates in the formulation of 5G standards to enhance technological discourse power. The combination of technological innovation and brand communication has made Huawei form a scientific and technological brand image. Even in the face of competitive pressure, it still maintains high user retention and brand loyalty, with a large market share in the high-end mobile phone market.

5 Research conclusions

5.1 Psychological mechanism of brand recall

The formation of brand recall relies on the synergy of three dimensions: cognition, emotion, and social culture. Cognitively, brand information is encoded after being received through the senses, stored in long-term memory in the form of a semantic network, and triggered for retrieval by cues in consumption scenarios. For instance, consumers receive information when they see unique packaging or hear brand slogans, and cues such as shelf displays during shopping can arouse these memories. At the emotional level, feelings of pleasure and satisfaction during consumption are bound to the brand. Just like Starbucks' comfortable environment creates a relaxing experience for consumers, such emotions deepen brand memory. In terms of social culture, regional culture influences brand preferences—people in Chongqing are familiar with local hotpot base brands; social circles shape memories through word-of-mouth communication, with internet-famous products among young groups being quickly remembered through sharing on social platforms.

5.2 Impact of brand recall on brand loyalty

(1) Brand recall is closely related to loyalty. The deeper the brand impression in consumers' memories, the more priority they give to it when purchasing. Take shampoo as an example: consumers remember Head & Shoulders' positioning of "anti-dandruff," so when they have dandruff problems, they are more likely to buy it, and repeated purchases form brand loyalty.

(2) Emotionally driven brand recall plays a stronger role in enhancing loyalty. Cognitive recall is based on product

functions and prices, while emotional recall is associated with consumers' emotional experiences. Coca-Cola connects the brand with joyful scenes through marketing, so that consumers have emotional resonance when recalling the brand and are more willing to stick to their choice in the face of competing products.

(3) Fast-moving consumer goods are purchased frequently with quick decisions, so brand recall has a greater impact. When consumers choose instant noodles, they often directly select brands like Master Kong and Uni-President that are in their memories; durable goods are purchased cautiously. Although brand recall has an effect, consumers will consider multiple factors such as performance, price, and after-sales service, so its impact is lower than that on fast-moving consumer goods.

5.3 Research limitations

This study adopts literature analysis and case study methods, lacking large-scale data verification. The selected cases such as Coca-Cola and Huawei are typical but cannot represent all industry brands. Literature research relies on existing achievements, which has lag. Future research can conduct questionnaires to cover people of different ages, regions, and consumption levels to obtain extensive data; design controlled variable experiments to accurately study the impact mechanism of each dimension of brand recall on loyalty, so as to improve the reliability of conclusions.

6 Management suggestions

6.1 Strengthening brand memory points

(1) Enterprises should design unique brand symbols. Brand logos should be concise and easy to remember, slogans should highlight characteristics, and packaging designs should be novel. Apple's LOGO, slogans, and product packaging form a highly recognizable system, enabling consumers to quickly identify and remember. The design should be in line with brand positioning and target groups.

(2) Use short videos and social media for high-frequency brand communication. Emerging media have fast dissemination speed and wide coverage. Perfect Diary has achieved rapid brand promotion through Xiaohongshu recommendations and short video content. Enterprises can regularly release brand stories and product use tutorials, and interact with consumers to deepen impressions.

(3) Pay attention to product appearance design. Dyson's bladeless fan attracts attention with its unique shape. Enterprises should work hard on product shape and color matching, integrate brand elements into details, such as printing brand logos and using exclusive colors, so that products become carriers of brand memory.

6.2 Enhancing emotional experience

(1) Providing high-quality products and services is the foundation. Haidilao has won word-of-mouth with enthusiastic reception and considerate services. Enterprises should strictly control product quality, optimize service processes, improve staff quality, and meet consumer needs.

(2) Carry out emotional marketing and explore brand story culture. Pechoin tells brand inheritance stories to arouse the feelings of domestic products, and Jiangxiaobai communicates with young people through literary copywriting. Enterprises can spread brand stories through advertisements and offline activities to arouse emotional resonance.

(3) Attach importance to consumer feedback. Xiaomi collects users' opinions on the system through forums and updates quickly. Enterprises can collect suggestions through questionnaires, customer service, and social media, and establish a rapid response mechanism to make consumers feel valued.

6.3 Implementing differentiated strategies

(1) Durable goods should emphasize technical advantages and brand value. Tesla attracts consumers with electric vehicle technology and high-end positioning, and Siemens publicizes innovative technologies of home appliances to establish a professional image, enhancing consumers' purchase confidence.

(2) Conduct in-depth market segmentation. L'Oreal launches different cosmetic brands for different groups of people. Enterprises should identify the differences in needs of consumer groups and formulate differentiated strategies. Coca-Cola has launched mini-packs and sugar-free versions to meet different needs, accurately attracting target customers and improving loyalty.

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