

A Study on the Guidance Strategies of Knowledge-oriented Leader to Promote Users' Digital Hoarding - An Examination of Red Note's Examination Bloggers

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ABSTRACT

Digital media technology has exacerbated users' digital hoarding behaviours by externalising permanent memories, and this phenomenon has been further strengthened by Knowledge-oriented Key Opinion Leader(KOL)s' use of discourse strategies to guide users to pay for their knowledge. In this paper, we take the Graduate Admission Examination (GAE) blogger of red note as the point of investigation, and with the help of in-depth interviews and participant observation, we analyse the existing materials and find that KOLs guide users to stimulate their hoarding intention with four major tactics: emotional binding, anxiety creation, technological empowerment, and cognitive loop closure. However, behind digital hoarding users may fall into the circular paradox of false cognitive anxiety, and platforms constitute complicit liability.

KEYWORDS

Digital hoarding; Theory of planned behaviour(TPB); Key opinion leader(KOL); Knowledge-oriented Leader; Platform liability

1 Introduction

In the era of new media, the quantity of information has exploded, people out of the fear of missing information and the irrational prediction of the value of information 'useful in the future' brought about by the double self-suggestion, in the USB flash drive, cloud drive, hard disk drive and other digital storage technology externalised and permanent information, individuals continue to collect documents, videos, links and other digital information, equating digital resources to a carrier of security and identity construction ^[1], forming an irrational accumulation inertia. However, after accumulating a certain amount, people refuse to organise or delete them due to emotional dependence, uncertainty avoidance, and low storage costs, which ultimately leads to 'storage without use', digital space chaos, and even psychological problems such as stress and meaninglessness anxiety, as well as a decrease in the efficiency of actions ^[2].

With the development of technology, scholars have paid more and more attention to the phenomenon of digital hoarding in social media, and the discussion of its influencing factors and generating mechanisms has been deepened. Among them, knowledge acquisition scenarios are the high incidence of digital hoarding ^[3], and these scenarios take social media such as Weibo, red note, Zhihu, and bilibili as platforms. The communicators and receivers appearing in the scenes, the interest relationship brought between them influences the agenda setting of the communicators for the content they share ^[4-5], and the communicators form a systematic text strategy in order to obtain more benefits, which in a sense is a practice for the communicators for the digital hoarding influencing factors in the knowledge acquisition scenes, and it is more important to further study the conditions for the role of the digital hoarding influencing factors of the different scenes in the social media. This strategy in a sense provides supportive materials for further research on the conditionality and complexity of the role of digital hoarding influences in different scenarios in social media.

2 Literature review

2.1 Digital hoarding

The concept of digital hoarding originated from hoarding disorder. Hoarding, refers to an incentive mechanism evolved by the human brain: hoarding creates a sense of pleasure and satisfaction ^[6], and early studies considered hoarding disorder to be a pathological manifestation of psychological hoarding behaviours associated with obsessive-compulsive personality traits, in which an individual does not take into account the actual value of an item, excessively solicits it and fails to make trade-offs, which in turn results in a large number of hoarding behaviours ^[7]. Hoarding disorder was introduced into the digital domain in 2015 by Van Bennekom (Van Bennekom) and others ^[8], i.e., the excessive acquisition of digital content by users even to the extent of losing rational judgement. At present, the definition of digital hoarding is not uniform in China, and for digital hoarding, more scholars in China have emphasised its rationality as an adaptive strategy, i.e., youth groups cope with knowledge anxiety and competitive pressure through hoarding ^[9-10]. This paper follows Tu Yalin et al.'s understanding of digital hoarding, that is, digital hoarding refers to the behaviour of an individual who unconsciously and continuously collects a large amount of digital content that may not be able to

produce value, resulting in cluttering the digital space and damaging the individual's information processing ability and psychological health ^[11].

Digital hoarding behaviour is influenced by multiple factors, and existing studies have mostly analysed it from the dimensions of individual psychological factors, information and platform factors, and social factors. For individual users, self-efficacy, user information literacy, and uncertainty avoidance have a greater impact on users ^[12], while individual physiological and psychological factors, such as individual needs, individual personality and individual habits, are also included ^[13], and the sense of attachment, anxiety, and sense of security brought by a specific scenario have a correlation with the intention of digital hoarding. For information and platform factors, some scholars have found that information rarity and command perception, storage cost and technological convenience are all elements related to behaviour ^[14]. Socially contextual, social scenarios such as interpersonal relationships and social security also have a significant effect ^[15].

2.2 Theory of planned behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was introduced by Ajzen in 1985 and provides a solid theoretical framework for understanding digital hoarding behaviour. The theory emphasises behavioural intention as the direct antecedent variable of behaviour, and this intention is influenced by three factors: behavioural attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control ^[16]. Earlier studies have directly transposed the theory to the field of digital hoarding and found that perceived behavioural control is the core driver, while subjective norms have a weaker influence, e.g., in online shopping scenarios where users take advantage of technological convenience to hoard goods ^[17]. However, the theory presupposes that individual behaviours are rational and controlled by cognitive decision-making behaviours, so there are limitations in its explanatory power for certain digital-specific factors - such as the failure to incorporate contextualised variables such as emotional anxiety ^[18-19]. Subsequent studies have mainly addressed this issue through variable expansion, contextualised modification, and integrated models.

Some scholars split behavioural attitudes into emotional attachment and perceived usefulness, and introduced two new variables, behavioural avoidance and information categorization deficits, confirming that emotional attachment significantly drives hoarding while perceived usefulness does not ^[11]. However, scholars have supplemented the pervasiveness of TPB for different scenarios in the field of digital hoarding; for the problem that the influence of subjective norms is not significant, cognitive authority in Knowledge-oriented communities can replace the traditional social norms as a new driver; and perceived usefulness also forms a complementary mechanism with affective attachment in utilitarian scenarios ^[20]. In recent years, studies have combined theoretical and push-and-pull frameworks to construct multifactor grouping models; for example, the three factors of high self-efficacy, high uncertainty avoidance, and technological convenience jointly trigger preventive hoarding ^[21]; and the behavioural patterns under the three major push-and-pull frameworks of opportunity-motivated, motivated-stress, and ability-supporting, which were proposed by Bi-Chongwu scholars in their study ^[20].

2.3 Objects and platforms

For Knowledge-oriented KOL, this kind of blogger relies on resource hoarding to establish an authoritative image ^[22], the more the number of knowledge collections collated, the more users brought by the siphoning effect as well as the expansion of its influence, and the numbers bring a sense of peace of mind to the individual ^[23], and also generate trust in the blogger, thus becoming a fan. Knowledge-oriented Leader through the flow of cash, knowledge payment and other ways to profit, to sum up, Knowledge-oriented Leader by the user's information needs to profit, and digital hoarding will prompt the user to KOL for information, therefore, Knowledge-oriented Leader how to guide the user's digital hoarding to generate the demand for information has become a group of social media 'mandatory course' ^[24].

Among them, candidates in the preparation for the examination out of the life path decision, self-improvement, external competition, fixed time boundaries of the pressure, the main driving force for the information request is much stronger than other knowledge acquisition scene ^[22], after 00 as the main force of the social network, the candidates are more adept at the use of social networks to obtain information relative to the other age groups ^[23]. 2025, the number of applicants for the examination and graduate school to reach 3.88 million, and the number of applicants for the examination and graduate school to reach 3.88 million. The examination is different from the college entrance examination which has a school full closed curriculum arrangement, but is prepared through their own information retrieval and self-study programme arrangement.

Red note was launched in 2013 by Shanghai Xingyin Information Technology Co. as a lifestyle sharing platform, supplemented by graphic notes mainly video notes, supporting long text and structured typesetting, algorithms favouring purpose clarity, and timeliness yielding to content ^[25]. Compared with the Shake microblogging platform is more conducive to the output of systematic in-depth knowledge. Therefore, this paper chooses red note examining bloggers as the examination point.

Red note platform in May 2025, the daily active users of 128 million, 'GAE' tag search volume of 10.7 billion, the discussion volume of 80.438 million, of which more than 10,000 active exam bloggers, the head of the KOL single advertisement quotes more than 200,000 yuan, there is a fairly large scale, it is the ideal field for observing the Knowledge-oriented KOL guidance strategy.

3 The research method

For the problem of how to guide the Knowledge-oriented Leader, this paper firstly selects 8 head exam study bloggers (more than 500,000 fans on all platforms) to carry out continuous observation in the period of about 3 months from September to early December 2024 for the exam study sprint period, and carry out secondary observation in the period of March to May 2025 for the exam study selection period. In 6 months, the author browses the exam study related keywords with high praise and high playback volume 324 pieces of The author screened 48 videos and 27 notes of classic guidance strategy, tracked the videos and thousands of comments under the tweets of classic guidance strategy and analysed them in depth by text analysis, and observed the effectiveness of the strategy by comparing the data of the single video, the revenue and the response of the comments, and the number of fans.

Secondly, with the help of interview method and participatory observation method to obtain information, interviews, the author will be 21 22 exams high hoarding users and 3 knowledge bloggers into AB two groups, in July 2024 to June 2025 successively on their online or offline in-depth interviews, the interview length of a total of 7.8 hours, the recording file about 21,000 words. Interview users mainly through the distribution of digital hoarding scale self-assessment questionnaires in the community of four colleges and universities in Sichuan Province, the recovery of valid questionnaires 307, comprehensive consideration of the severity of symptoms, personal will, time schedule and other factors screened out 10 high hoarding users, the interviewees are mostly high-frequency use of the Little Red Book for the acquisition of knowledge of the user, the examination of the study of more than for their own information retrieval and scheduling. 3 knowledge bloggers are mostly fans of the amount of more than 50,000 less than 200,000 waist bloggers with stable self-media income.

The main purpose of the interviews is to reveal the matching mechanism between KOL strategies and users' psychology, and to verify and supplement the previous observations of online ethnography. Therefore, the interview outline presents two focuses, the knowledge blogger focuses on the words he usually uses and the response he aims to get, as well as the strategy arrangement he thinks is more effective in his working experience, while the high hoarding user focuses on his behavioural motivation, and explains the reasons why he prefers to collect the videos he watches after being shown videos of KOL's classic guiding strategy.

The author as a willingness to study for the exam, but also a member of the exam preparation candidates, around the number of students and friends who are preparing to study for the exam is also a large number of observation samples and easy to access, there are also ashore as a knowledge blogger and the flow of the exam blogger is not small, there is a relatively direct access to this industry. In the preparation for the examination for the choice of school and the examination for the purpose of research, but also for self-improvement and knowledge acquisition for the style of the various examination bloggers have a basic understanding of the psychological state and emotional changes in the preparation for the examination of empathy candidates, at the same time, the author frequently observed in addition to the small red book of digital media platforms related to the examination, due to the age of the location of the algorithm recommended, can be more in-depth group, nearly a year the average daily observation time of more than 40 minutes.

4 The four types of strategies of Knowledge-oriented KOL guidance

As mentioned earlier, TPB has different mechanisms for the role of various factors in different scenarios in the field of digital hoarding, so is it possible to confirm or even supplement to the extent of continually improving the universality of TPB through the strength of the guidance strategies of Knowledge-oriented KOLs in the knowledge acquisition scenarios and their role effects? Based on the interviews and observations, this paper summarises four typical strategies of Knowledge-oriented Leader, namely: emotional binding, anxiety creation, technology empowerment, and cognitive closure. This part mainly explores the practice process, practice logic and practice effect of the main tactics of the four types of strategies, and analyses the different degrees of their joint role with platform-related functions, algorithmic recommendations and other technologies.

4.1 Emotional binding

Emotional binding strategy refers to the Knowledge-oriented Leader through the emotional resonance with the user

as well as the generation of identity, digital information resources into the emotional carrier between the KOL and the user, to stimulate the user's irrational hoarding behaviour. The theoretical basis of emotional binding is mainly emotional value supply and authority reliance, with the content to make the user to obtain a sense of belonging and self-affirmation, after the accumulation of time, the user will be the trust of professional resources migrate to the KOL personal image, there are mainly the following two types of discourse.

One is the struggle narrative discourse, 'how much I want to thank myself who worked so hard when I took the exam and the blog' (Little Red Book blogger @Yang miemie (pregnancy research edition), January 2024 notes). From the data of a single note, the comment section has 190 comments, the blogger has 20,000 followers, 279 published notes, and 2,620 favourites, and the total number of likes and favourites of this post is the second most among the notes on his homepage. Comment area user feedback is mainly the following three categories: First, the exam students face the test anxiety and help 'Why do I rest for a while feel the efficiency is so low do not want to write ah'; Second, the emotional resources into behavioural motivation "At this moment, I am reviewing the final, see your post is very want to cry, thank you! Thank you for the motivation you brought' commenting on the blogger's feedback on the keyword 'effort' in the dialogue; third, the blogger's notes in the picture of the school supplies (soft - advertisements, that is, inconspicuous means of advertising and marketing) to link to the enquiry. This technique overlaps the personal experience with the user's ideal, and the success story brings a kind of psychological implication of 'I can do the same if I am like this', subconsciously learning and imitating the blogger's experience and behaviour and even school supplies, collecting his notes and joining the fan group and purchasing the products, and the blogger thus obtains the revenue.

The second is the community attribution discourse, 'Summer Vacation Exam Fact Sheet | Just stick to each day and that's enough' (Little Red Book blogger @Shi duo pi li , 4 August 2024 notes). User feedback in the comments section showed a lot of 'also' and "and" words, 'I'm in,' 'I love it too' Firstly, in terms of identity, the blogger, as an exam student, is not in a superior position, but is a community of destiny that overcomes a major difficulty at the same time with the exam users. Secondly, in the video content, the blogger often does not teach experience as a successful person, but boldly shows confusion and bewilderment, and draws closer to the users. 'I enjoyed watching her when I was studying for my exams, wanting to see how she dealt with the kind of situation where I was so internally entangled and stressed out that there is a feeling that you're not alone, and that there are people suffering with you.' (Interviewee A7) At the same time the perspective flipped to the sender side, interviewee B2 admitted: "In fact, this kind of relative other is very convenient to start the number, because one is that you are a student, the algorithm will recommend you about the same identity and age of the crowd, and there is also a content manufacturing is simple, you just need to every day to put their own thoughts and encountered the things done record it. " This is also the reason why more than half of the students in the examination bloggers accounted for more than half of the students, they through the identity and content making to produce group identity, and users to produce a bond. As seen from the high frequency of blogger love name in the comment area (which is not lacking in multiple comment users), the fan group viscosity will be higher. Compared to the height of the collection of single notes, this type of blogger's collection of each note will be relatively more stable, the minimum will not be under a hundred, and share the worries and matters of the heart of the examination (i.e., the blogger's broken thoughts column video) collection will be higher. After probing the monthly salaries of the respondents in Group B, it was found that this type of 'companion' bloggers reached a sustained gain, i.e., the lower limit of the salary is the highest, similar to the magnitude of changes in the number of favourites.

4.2 Anxiety creation

Anxiety creation tactics are used to stimulate a sense of urgency through scarcity and loss aversion, thus driving preventive hoarding behaviours. It usually manifests itself in the exam scenario by amplifying the competitive intensity and information gap of the exam, and directly equating the option of not acquiring information to the direct factor of rising risk of exam failure. In the TPB framework, the strategy significantly strengthens behavioural attitudes and perceptual-behavioural control, which is effective for high uncertainty avoidance groups ^[12], with the following main discourses.

First, the time threatening discourse, red note 'countdown to the GAE' topic until 28 June 2025, a total of 330 million views and 2.845 million discussions. In addition to the candidate's self record, there is no lack of knowledge class KOL with this topic to carry out a knowledge payment scene, "the last three days! These words must be memorised! Delete immediately!" Time marking out, exclamation points and tone words 'must', in attracting the user's attention on the basis of strengthening the sense of urgency, delete the means of operation to bring users a kind of 'miss that is forever' feeling. 'Generally specialised in selling classes number will use such words more, behind the relevant cooperation with the institution, rather than the small red book common exam blogger will use.' Interviewee B3 declared. The fact is that, in general, this kind of discourse relies on authority, so the lessons sold are often some authoritative head of the exam blogger's recorded screen and the derivation of the product and the use of which the difference in price to earn profits. As

for the involvement of copyright and other issues, I leave aside.

Secondly, the catastrophic preset words, "the method of exam paper unsealing exams must see! Do wrong directly 0 marks!" (red note blogger @Chong ge jue qi, December 2024 notes), with the same 'life-saving', 'first aid', 'high-risk' and other exaggerated rendering of words as the window merchandise. The author observes that this rhetoric is often synergistic with visual stimuli, using bold, vivid colours and black and yellow warning labels to embellish the cover of the note content, with text and colours dominating the space. At the same time, high-contrast colours can be preferentially captured by retinal ganglion cells, shortening the information processing delay. Empirical studies have shown that the click-through rate of such covers in the information flow is 47% higher than the normal design^[25]. And it is also true that the sales of the blogger's items that utilised this discourse were much higher than those that did not.

Thirdly, the competition renders the rhetoric, 'Hot women: immobile and in control, others take holidays and I study.' (Little Red Book blogger @GlowingWithMe 22 July 2025 notes), compared to the previous vlog and dry goods sharing blogger, this type of blogger is more specific - conceptual output, using the film plot book discourse for the study of the user to provide more emotional help, this positioning makes discourse rendering. This positioning makes the discourse rendering effect more amplified, can also be commonly known as 'chicken blood'. Through the rendering of the competition, the urgency is generated, and at the same time, with the power of music and words, the fear of difficulties will be transformed into the challenge of impulse. According to her video collection data and feedback from the comments section, this kind of video, which favours aesthetics and reflection, also has its own unique audience.

4.3 Technological empowerment

The technological empowerment strategy refers to the Knowledge-oriented KOL to reduce the cognitive and operational costs of users' hoarding behaviours by taking advantage of the platform's technological convenience, so as to make users perceive the controllability and usability of the digital resources, thus stimulating the hoarding intention. Under the TPB framework, the strategy is mainly aimed at the perceptual behavioural control dimension, which is driven by enhancing the user's trust in the platform's technological information management capabilities, thus promoting the irrational hoarding behaviour. The author mainly analyses the following three major functions.

4.3.1 User favourite classification function

The favourite function is set in the bottom-right corner of the hover icon, so users do not need to jump out of the page to operate, and the operation is extremely convenient. The platform has no limitation on the capacity of favourites, and allows labels to be classified, so the storage cost is low. 'Anyway, if it's useful, put it in, in case you need it in the future, and it doesn't take up much memory anyway.' Interviewee A5 said. Both reduce the user's hoarding cost and weaken the user's rational assessment of the value of information.

4.3.2 Knowledge-oriented leader ensemble function

In the face of the Little Red Book two for a line of layout design, KOL in the release of hundreds of notes after finishing the ensemble on top, and this significantly reduces the demand for the user's time cost, the user does not need to open one by one to sort out the logic but a key to the collection, this function is also reflected in the fourth strategy.

4.3.3 Platform algorithm recommended function

When users pay attention to the study blogger and collection of its related notes, the algorithm will continue to push similar information content, reducing the user's search cost, but will give users the formation of 'sufficient information' illusion.

However, as for the interviews with the interviewees, they found that there is a tendency for high hoarding users to 'Technological Rationality', i.e. to equate the act of collecting with the efficacy of acquiring knowledge, interviewee A8 explains: "The main reason is that it is convenient to collect the red note collection, and if I do, it will be placed at the bottom of my homepage, so I have a feeling of peace of mind that the knowledge belongs to me. sense of peace of mind." Such users' reliance on technology confirms the central driving role of technological enablement for hoarding behaviour in the TPB framework, as well as the fact that perceived usefulness directly and significantly positively affects users' willingness to continue using it in knowledge acquisition scenarios^[26].

4.4 Cognitive closure

Cognitive closure strategy refers to the Knowledge-oriented KOL constructing a logically self-contained knowledge

system with implied gaps, so that the user generates the cognitive anxiety of 'incomplete information will lead to loss', thus continuously driving digital hoarding. In the TPB framework, this strategy works on both behavioural attitudes and perceptual behavioural control to enhance the final hoarding intention. The logic chain of the blogger's discourse setting is analysed as follows.

Continue to analyse the notes from the article 'Examination study 'blind guide to landing'' (Little Red Book blogger @Chong ge jue qi, December 2024 notes). The blogger is positioned as an expert in art exam study test-taking skills, specialising in cognitive blind spots in the exam process. First of all, for the gap is preset, the knowledge system is disassembled into fixed modules, and implied that there is a hidden correlation between the modules, in the content of the video, the blogger first tells the user that there exists a set of basic scoring answer templates for the expository questions of the examination (a theory and an example), and in the video, from his own collation of first aid kits to raise the score of the choice of a classic theory for one of the templates answering the questions demonstrated, and the classic theory and template of this gap, that is, for the artificial creation of a knowledge chain break. Secondly, the loophole supplement is strongly associated with the expected consequences, such as 'I believe that after you have learnt this method, you will be able to write as much as you can in the face of the questions you don't know and raise ten points more'. Finally, the use of technology to empower the use of platform features to strengthen the closed-loop logic by placing the sales product directly below the video and in the homepage window. For this strategy, interviewee A9 believes that this process of question-answering demonstration is more persuasive and inducing compared to the words used in discourse for highly hoarded users, 'It will feel like if you have that "first aid kit" your own question-answering will be as smooth as his.'

5 The cognitive costs of digital hoarding and platform responsibility

These four types of strategies, together with the technical architecture of red note, shape the digital hoarding driver model: users generate irrational hoarding intentions due to factors such as emotional binding and cognitive closure, and the platform converts the intentions into sustained behaviours through algorithmic and functional design. However, through observation and interviews, the author found that this model comes at the expense of users' cognitive health.

Firstly, technological convenience has weakened the ability to process information. Interviewee A1 confessed, 'The collection will not necessarily go to see and organise, and wait until the time of use, but the brain is a mess, the collection should be in the essence not in the more.' It was observed that the ten high hoarding respondents in Group A generally had the problem of being unable to effectively extract information due to information redundancy. This phenomenon is consistent with the theory of attentional dilution, i.e., information overload reduces the efficiency of cognitive resource allocation^[14,24].

Second, anxiety-producing strategies amplify users' loss aversion and drive preventive hoarding. However, empirical evidence shows that excessive hoarding crowds out effective learning time: respondent A6 spends an average of 40 minutes per day sorting out collected information, which is much longer than the actual learning time. This behaviour led to a decrease in self-efficacy, which in turn created a negative feedback loop of 'low efficiency and high anxiety'^[12]. This goes against the rational behavioural decision-making that TPB presupposes^[18].

These problems, the platform needs to take responsibility, algorithmic recommendations to strengthen the information cocoon, while the flow of cash incentives, forcing Knowledge-oriented Leader to use the radicalisation of the user's emotional discourse, these mechanisms, in the Knowledge-oriented Leader strategy to amplify the efficiency of at the same time, for the cognitive cost of the emergence of the formation of structural complicity. However, so that the complete abolition of the traffic cash mechanism and algorithmic recommendation and other functions is more harm than good, the design of the platform should take a more moderate way to improve and supplement, such as adding the favourites timed cleanup prompts, prompting the user to have to go to the finishing line, which may be the direction of the future of the knowledge-sharing software designers should consider.

6 Conclusion and discussion

Based on the theoretical framework of planned behaviour, this study reveals the mechanism of action of Knowledge-oriented KOL to stimulate users' digital hoarding intention through four types of strategies, namely, emotional binding, anxiety creation, technological empowerment, and cognitive loop closure. However, the sample of this study focuses on the examination group, and the generality of the conclusions needs to be verified across scenarios. Meanwhile, the black box of the platform algorithm leads to the reliance on indirect observation when observing the analysis of strategy traffic response, and the relevant research can be further deepened by combining with the eye-tracking experiments to track the users' information processing paths in the future.

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