



How Does Audio Marketing Work?

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Audio marketing is an important part of new media marketing. Its estimated market size increases by 44 times within seven years, and the growth trend of the industry is explosive. However, within a decade of development, there are still many problems to be solved. The purpose of this paper is to verify the significance, problems and countermeasures of audio marketing. Data was collected by literature retrieval and induction method was employed for analysis and interpretation. Findings show that the main problems of audio marketing are focused on audio content production (audio products/services) and platform management, and there is a relative lack of discussion on audio market analysis and target marketing analysis. Finally, it is suggested that future research should start from these two directions and give recommendations on audio marketing.

Keywords: Audio marketing; new media marketing; voice products.

1. INTRODUCTION

Voice/Music channel is the main carrier of audio marketing. More generally, audio marketing is promoted through audio, which is a new network

marketing model [1]. In other words, audio marketing is a marketing activity that audio enterprises or general enterprises use the platform of music/audio channels to send information to the audience (audience) to meet

the needs of the audience for marketing purposes. Under this definition, audio in audio marketing mainly refers to online voice interactive communication (such as YY voice), songs, crosstalk, poetry reciting, article reading and other forms of recording [1].

According to the report of Guanyan Institute of Production and Economics in 2021, the output value of China ' s audio industry (market size) is estimated to be 1.2 billion RMB in 2015, and is expected to grow to 5.43 billion RMB in 2022 (see Fig. 1), a total of 7 years of growth of 44.25 times [2]. At present (the end of 2020), the main domestic audio enterprise manufacturers include Shanghai Himalayan Technology Co., Ltd., Beijing Aiyueshi Technology Co., Ltd., Guangzhou Tianyuchuanggao Electronic Technology Co., Ltd., Guangzhou Disciplinary Audio Technology Co., Ltd., Guangdong Gongxin Intelligent Conference Co., Ltd., Guangzhou Yuesheng Electronic Technology Co., Ltd., Beijing Xiaoyuyilian Technology Co., Ltd., Shenzhen Youse Specialized Technology Co., Ltd. [3]. The main manufacturers are concentrated in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and other first-tier cities.

Moreover, the main business models of China's audio enterprises include user payment, user appreciation, advertising marketing and

hardware sales [3]. Obviously, the profit model of audio enterprises in China is more focused on advertising marketing and hardware sales. Excessive concentration of revenue sources may have a negative impact on the long-term development of enterprises and industries. For example, BATJ (Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent and Jingdong), the leader of China ' s internet companies, has the advantages of technology, capital and human resources of its large network group, and has the opportunity to cross-industry into the audio field at any time. If manufacturers in the original field do not have sufficient operating projects and revenue sources, it is likely to cause a sharp decline in revenue and insufficient cash flow. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss the problems and countermeasures of audio marketing.

In summary, since the audio industry has such a market scale and so many enterprises are willing to adopt audio marketing, the industry has future development potentially, which is an industry worthy of further discussion. The purpose of this study is to explore the significance, problems and countermeasures of audio marketing. Data analyzed in this study was collected by literature retrieval from the relevant internet and library. Furthermore, an induction method was employed for analysis and interpretation. We first summarized the key words of the paper based

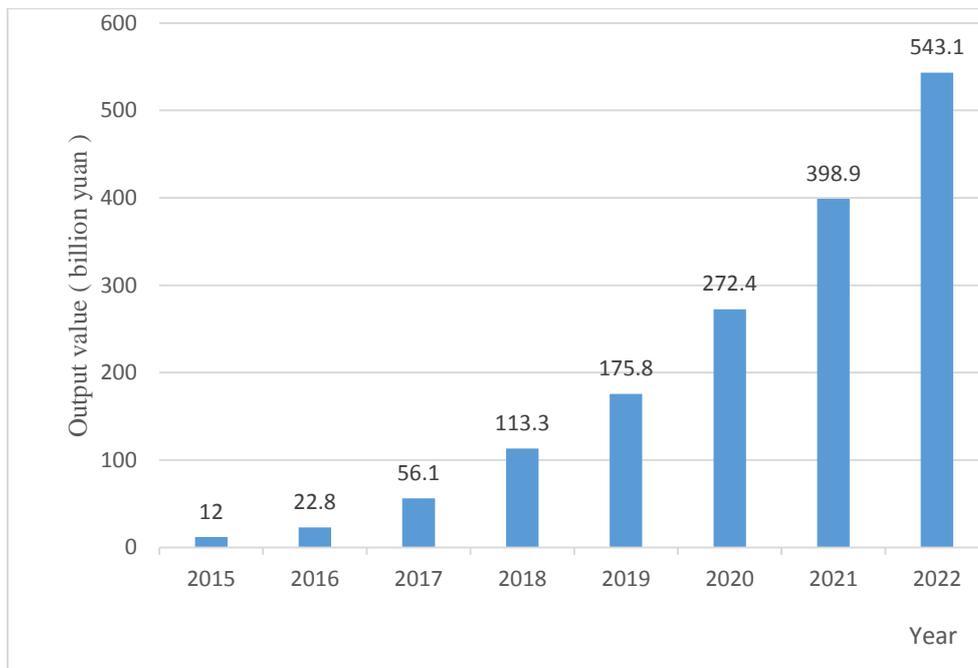


Fig. 1. Estimation of output value of audio industry in China
 Source: Watching Research Institute

on its definitions and problems mentioned on the paper. Then, a new dimension for both definitions and problems was inductive based on its characteristics. These three themes will be displayed in the following chapters.

2. THE DEFINITION OF AUDIO MARKETING

The definition of audio marketing is shown in Table 1. Baidu encyclopedia believes that it is an activity for product/service promotion through audio platform. Liu [4] reports the marketing activity has two-way interaction. Gao [5] focuses on meeting people's leisure and entertainment needs through audio platform. Yin [6] emphasized that the industry is the marketing of sound products. No matter what kind of definition, scholars' brushing is basically centered on the satisfaction of audio platform and users to the needs of voice products. Accordingly, this study defines audio marketing as an audio enterprise, a general enterprise organization and/or an individual user provide audio services to meet users' needs through their own audio platform or others in order to achieve marketing purposes.

Under this definition, audio enterprises can use their own platform for audio marketing, general enterprises (enterprises without audio platform) can also promote their tangible and intangible products / services through the audio platform. Basically, for general enterprises, audio marketing is close to cross-industry integration. Therefore, more and more enterprises are willing to adopt audio marketing. For example, Bisheng Guest (Pisa production and marketing enterprises) once used the Ximalaya FM platform to launch the 'dinner' activity to mobilize the enthusiasm of both the anchor and fans. In the end, 42 of the top 50 hosts on the Ximalaya FM platform participated in the program, and the broadcast was implanted in the program, which triggered the voluntary forwarding and sharing of the main broadcast coffee and fans, and quickly detonated in a short time, resulting in tens of millions of brand direct communication effects. The success of the event is due to the characteristics of the opinion leader of the anchor, the affinity of the voice and the loyalty of the fans. These three elements make the audio marketing implant more distinctive [7].

3. THE PROBLEMS IN AUDIO MARKETING

The audio marketing issues are summarized in Table 2. From the research of scholars, it can be

concluded that the problems of audio marketing mainly include content making (production), communication, platform management (interaction, user conversion, profit model), pricing, marketing channels and promotion advertising, which basically cover the combination elements of traditional marketing mix such as product, price, distribution channels and promotion.

In terms of products, the main problems include content production (production), such as insufficient supply of high-quality subdivision content [6], long production cycle [4], and homogenization of content [4,5,8], the content classification is not in place [5], the quality is uneven [4], and audio broadcast is difficult to produce a sustainable effect [6].

Secondly, in terms of price, the main problem is the high price of paid products [6]. In terms of distribution channels, it is limited to the sales channels of online proprietary platforms [6]. In terms of promotional advertising, hard advertising placement affects user experience [4], the push mechanism is consistent [5], and excessive emotional marketing, insufficient topic guidance and insufficient communication effect [9] and other issues.

Finally, in terms of platform management, there are few platform interaction modes and low user activity [5]. The profit model of mobile audio platform is single and scattered, and there is no system profit model [8]. Mobile audio user conversion is single [4]. The profit model of mobile audio is not clear, and there is a lack of stable profit model [4].

In terms of existing research, the main problem of audio marketing is focused on the product side, followed by the platform management side. In addition, scholars seem less involved in audio market analysis (user analysis and industry competition analysis), which makes the demand change of the industry and the degree of competition in the industry difficult to predict. What's more, the STP analysis of audio marketing (audio market) by scholars and practitioners is also insufficient, and it is difficult to use the subdivided market to better select the target market and carry out market positioning. Therefore, when the industry is not fully aware of audio consumers, the overall capacity is insufficient, and the audio production cycle is not improved, the problem of content homogeneity and charging is more difficult to solve.

Table 1. The Definition of Audio Marketing

Author (Year)	The Definition of Audio Marketing
Baidu(2021)	Audio marketing is to promote product/service activities through audio.
Liu (2017)	The communication of mobile audio is a bidirectional and interactive communication with the audience.
Gao (2021)	Through the audio platform, marketing activities that meet the increasingly fragmented needs of the public in the leisure and entertainment scene.
Yin (2019)	The paid audio platform provides voice products to meet the needs of users.

Source: Summary of this study

Table 2. The problems in audio marketing

Author (Year)	The Problems in Audio Marketing
Liao, & Dong (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The homogenization of mobile audio platform content is prominent. ● Mobile audio platform profit model is single and scattered, no system profit model.
Yin (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paid audio platforms and "voice producers" can't offer high quality detailed content. ● Difficult to produce sustainable audio broadcast. ● Network audio platform is limited to online platform sales channels, unable to pay for the maximum conversion of content. ● The price of paid products is still high after promotion and it is difficult to retain paid users.
Liu (2017)	<p>Audio content homogenization, single mode.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Audio platform audit strength is not enough, uneven quality. ● Mandatory advertising implants affect user experience. ● Single conversion mode for mobile audio users. ● Mobile audio profit model is not clear, the lack of stable profit model. ● Long production cycle of mobile audio products and difficulty in upgrade of products.
Gao (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Audio platforms have yet to discover good UGC content, and the content is very similar. ● Platform interaction mode is less; user activity is not high. ● Push mechanism is not new idea, personalized mode is not completed. ● There are still problems with content classification and UI design needs to be improved.
Zhang, Ju, & Liu (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Excessive emotional marketing. ● Lack of topic guidance. ● Cross-border cooperation is dominated by short-term cooperation, with insufficient communication effect.

Source: Summary of this study

4. THE COUNTERMEASURES FOR AUDIO MARKETING

Audio marketing strategy is shown in Table 3. Scholars' audio marketing strategies mainly focus on audio production, marketing mix and platform management, such as creating value-added services according to the characteristics of audio content [6]. High-quality UGC content should be appropriately supported to meet the needs of new media users [5]. Content DIY can fully meet the individual needs of users (Gao,

2021), which belongs to the audio content production and broadcasting problem (product service). Shaping a clearer differentiated competitive advantage [8]. highlighting the brand personalized turn [4]. Precision product positioning [9] belongs to the brand management strategy. Flexible price adjustment [6]. Practice audio content free mechanism, provide value-added services [4] is biased towards price strategic positioning. Multi-channel distribution of news, cooperation with existing communication channels [6]. Use accurate data dissemination to

Table 3. The Countermeasures in Audio Marketing

Author (Year)	The Countermeasures in Audio Marketing
Liao, &Dong (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shaping a clearer differentiated competitive advantage. ● Building additional functions with higher user stickiness. ● Liberating users ' eyes and returning to the nature of audio.
Yin (2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deep resonance between mobile audio and users. ● Create PUGC channels, according to the characteristics of audio content to create value-added services. ● Pay attention to copyright maintenance and purification of platform copyright environment. ● Flexible price adjustment, allowing users to ' tailor-made ' choice. ● The platform to ' take advantage ', multi-channel distribution of information, and existing channels of communication cooperation. ● Multi-channel publicity and marketing, in-depth excavation of internal social platforms, and formation of user communities.
Liu (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standardize audio copyright market and promote sound development. ● Outstanding brand personalized turn, depth to find brand value. ● Practice audio content free mechanism to provide value-added services. ● Innovation of native advertising play, create a win-win cooperation ecology. ● Accurate data dissemination is used to add interactive contact points. ● Innovation audio marketing mode, realization new channels.
Gao (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand audio application scenarios from online to offline. ● Appropriately supporting high-quality UGC content to meet the needs of new media users. ● Promote social platform operation, and form two-way interaction with the audience. ● Content DIY, fully meet the needs of users. ● Perfect UI design, conform to the new media platform design style. ● Broaden new media channels of communication and further enclose more potential users.
Zhan, Ju, & Liu (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Precise user needs, precise product positioning. ● Appropriate use of celebrity effect, enhance product reputation. ● Continuously manufacture related topics to maintain product freshness.

Source: Summary of this study

add interactive contacts [4]. Innovative audio marketing model and realization new channels for realization ([4]. Expanding audio application scenarios, online to offline [4] can be classified as distribution channel strategy. Multi-channel publicity and marketing [6]. Innovative native advertising play [4]. Broadening new media communication channels [5]. Appropriate use of celebrity effect, enhance product fame [9]. Continue to manufacture related topics, maintain product freshness [9] can be classified as promotion strategy. Finally, liberate users ' eyes and return to the essence of audio [8]. Promoting the socialization of platform operation and forming two-way interaction with the audience

[5] can be classified as platform management.

5. CONCLUSION

Audio marketing is not only a part of new media marketing, but also a highly growing industry. Whether professional audio enterprises or general enterprise institutions, one can pass through the audio platform voice and entity products and corresponding services to meet the needs of fans/customers pile voice products. For example, Yen [10] has argued that the new media can promote the development of health and wellness tourism. Audio is one kind of the

new media and can be applied to those industries. Moreover, audio marketing is like video marketing that its market scale will have a rocket raising in the coming decades and more and more firms have adopted it as useful tool in livestream [11, 12]. It means that both firms and scholars in this field should pay more attentions to its developing trend.

Furthermore, through the induction and analysis of the above contents, the main problems of audio marketing are focused on audio content production (audio products/services) and platform management, and relatively lack of discussion in market analysis and target marketing analysis. This offers the possible way to future research and the managers of the industry.

Moreover, previous studies have put forward countermeasures for audio marketing products, brands, distribution channels, promotion and platform management issues. However, the existing revenue channels are relatively concentrated, for audio enterprises. Under the premise of developing new products (new business) and balancing existing products (business), how to improve audio marketing performance has become a very important issue. Accordingly, it is suggested that future research should verify how audio enterprises can improve audio marketing performance through accurate STP analysis. More specifically, how to improve audio marketing performance through customer relationship management is a very important issue.

Finally, for ordinary enterprises, they may want to know more about how to marketing their own physical products or services through the audio platform, and the audio market analysis (user demand analysis) is related to the success or failure of enterprise marketing. Accordingly, it is suggested that future research can clarify the consumer behavior of audio users (audio listeners) through case studies.

DISCLAIMER

The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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