



A Study on Luckin Coffee's Brand Communication Strategy from the Perspective of Integrated Marketing Communications Theory

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Abstract

This study is based on the research framework of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) theory and takes Luckin Coffee, one of the successful marketing cases of coffee brands in the current market, as the research object. Using the research method of combining literature research and case study analysis, we study the brand's innovative practice at the level of communication strategy from the dimensions of contact management, synergistic effect, and maintenance of long-term relationships. This paper finds that Luckin Coffee has shaped a modified brand image that is accepted by the public through precise audience positioning, multi-channel integrated communication and consumer-oriented interactive strategies. But at the same time, in the process of research, we also found that the brand in the communication aspects has shortcomings and there is a current need to establish consumer demand as the core of the marketing strategy system, through the innovation and optimization of marketing concepts to enhance the brand identity and loyalty of consumers.

Subject Areas

Journalism and Communication

Keywords

Integrated Marketing Communications, Luckin Coffee, Communication Strate

1. Introduction

According to iiMedia Research, the market size of China's coffee industry reached

381.7 billion yuan in 2021 and is expected to grow to 485.6 billion yuan in 2022 [1], and consumers' acceptance and understanding of coffee beverages have been increasing year by year. As new coffee brands keep flooding the market and competition intensifies, traditional marketing and communication methods are no longer sufficient to meet the diverse needs of brand value shaping and market expansion. In recent years, Luckin Coffee has risen rapidly to become a key player in China's coffee sector. With its innovative business operation strategy and efficient and precise marketing communication methods, its turnover has increased effectively in a short period of time and it has successfully risen to become the second group of domestic coffee chain brand, following the industry leader Starbucks.

In today's highly competitive market environment, brand communication is crucial for the survival and development of enterprises. Luckin Coffee's success is inseparable from a multi-angle, all-around brand communication strategy. Integrated marketing communication theory originated in the United States and was first introduced to China by Lu Taihong (1996) [2]. Cao Wen (2011) attributed the emergence of the theory to advancements in productivity and media technologies, arguing that brand communication necessitated the integration of resources and the implementation of a unified strategy [3]. Chu Guangzhi (2010), examining the applicability of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) within the Chinese context, observed that both practical application and academic research remained in a nascent stage [4]. Nevertheless, Chu noted that subsequent research advancements had yielded significant scholarly progress in developing localized theoretical frameworks. The current research directions of integrated marketing communication in China mainly focus on three aspects. The first is the application of theory in the image building of multiple subjects. For instance, Li Jun (2019) proposed the integrated marketing communication strategy of Lianyungang City image [5]. For instance, Li Jun (2019) proposed the integrated marketing communication strategy of Lianyungang City image; Second, from the perspective of theoretical analysis, Gui Shihe and Tang Mei (2019) proposed that value co-creation is the development trend of integrated marketing communication goals [6]; Third, from the perspective of brand analysis and suggestions, such as Zheng Suhui et al. (2022) dissecting the brand operation strategy of the Reader program [7], Wang Yingnan and Xia Congya (2020) summarizing the characteristics of social media brand communication of the Palace Museum [8]. Academic inquiry has disproportionately focused on cultural studies, leaving a significant theoretical gap in understanding high-growth sectors like fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG)—particularly ready-to-drink beverages—and technological products.

In recent years, Luckin Coffee, as a representative of emerging coffee brands in China, has received extensive academic attention for its brand communication strategy. Wang Chen (2024) found that group unity and emotional power in the interactive ritual chain have significant effects on Luckin Coffee brand communication, and the effect of brand communication can be judged from aspects such

as users' offline shopping consumption [9]. Regarding the current situation and existing problems of Luckin Coffee's brand communication, Lv Jiahe (2022) pointed out that while the company successfully attracts and retains private domain traffic by highlighting brand distinctiveness and empowering product sales, it still faces issues such as an irrational benefits mechanism and limitations in user interaction and service [10]. In analyzing Luckin Coffee's brand communication strategies and innovations, Hu Hao's (2020) study identified several improvement measures: establishing a golden record customer database, refining AI-driven recommendation systems, and building omnichannel consumer engagement platforms [11]. Applying Peirce's semiotic framework, Han and Liu (2023) delineate how Luckin Coffee's brand signification is articulated through three semiotic modalities: indexical markers (systematic brand identifiers), iconic representations (curated experiential scenarios), and symbolic conventions (cultivated affective alignment) [12]. Current scholarship remains largely confined to single-dimensional analyses of communication strategies, revealing significant theoretical fragmentation and a paucity of holistic investigation. Theoretically, an examination of IMC strategies presents a valuable opportunity to address this gap and enhance the empirical foundation of IMC theory within the contexts of emerging markets and digital communication landscapes. Practically, such analysis facilitates a deeper understanding of IMC implementation and effectiveness in real business contexts, providing actionable guidance for homogeneous brands.

2. Touchpoint Management: Enhancing Information Diffusion Efficiency

Schultz (2002) posits that consumer purchase decisions are driven primarily by subjective perceptions as opposed to objective facts during the decision-making process [13]. Their consumption choices are essentially grounded in what they deem important, authentic, and correct, as opposed to being derived from rational analysis or meticulous calculations. This insight serves as a critical reminder for brands: when formulating marketing strategies, they must employ IMC to accentuate brand distinctiveness, thereby shaping consumer perceptions and achieving precision in brand messaging.

2.1. Audience-Centric Information Propagation

The current core consumer demographic in China's coffee market is aged 26 to 45, accounting for over 68% of total sales (shown in **Figure 1**). However, the fastest-growing segment is the 18 - 24 age group, reflecting a notable youth-oriented trend, while consumers aged 50+ also frequently visit coffee shops. Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities like Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou remain key consumption hubs. Yet with brand expansion into lower-tier markets, coffee consumption in county-level and rural areas has shown sustained growth, now representing 30.7% of total sales. This consumer demographic exhibits price sensitivity while valuing consumption experiences, concurrently demonstrating high receptivity to trendy and fashiona-

ble brands. In practical implementation, Luckin Coffee has adopted multifaceted approaches to target this segment, achieving precision in information dissemination.

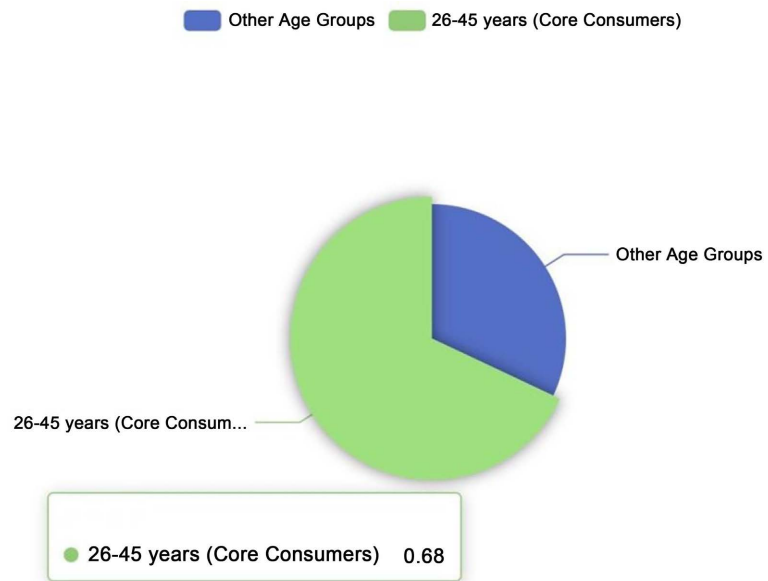


Figure 1. Age distribution of China's core coffee consumers (2024).

Regarding store network deployment and targeted advertising, Luckin Coffee initially implemented aggressive retail expansion across prime urban commercial zones, constructing an omnipresent offline service infrastructure. The brand subsequently employed WeChat's geofencing technology to execute location-based marketing campaigns, algorithmically aligning consumer proximity with store locations for hyper-localized advertisement delivery and private traffic management. As coffee retail remains fundamentally store-dependent, such geographically precise marketing demonstrates statistically significant improvements in both store exposure metrics and customer inflow rates. This approach significantly enhances ad reach and impression-to-conversion rate while optimizing the efficiency of marketing resource allocation.

Concurrently, Luckin Coffee has leveraged social media platforms for high-frequency, interactive brand communication. Through strategic collaborations with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs), the company generates user-generated content (UGC) that effectively captures young consumers' attention. The partnered KOLs disseminate extensive product seeding content, utilizing their influence and follower base to rapidly propagate information about Luckin's new products among youth demographics. Taking Rednote as a representative case, the hashtag #LuckinNewProducts has achieved over 1.2 billion views with nearly 7 million engagements. Luckin's partnership ecosystem includes numerous food bloggers and lifestyle influencers, who are invited to taste new products and share authentic consumption experiences.

2.2. Differentiated Brand Positioning Architecture

While traditional coffee brands like Starbucks represent “premium, authentic, ambiance,” Luckin Coffee has strategically positioned itself as “affordable, innovative, grab-and-go.” Notably, Luckin’s advertising slogan—“Are you paying for the coffee or the café? No need to pay for space!”—directly challenges Starbucks’ “Third Place” concept. This deliberate contrast emphasizes Luckin’s product-centric approach over ancillary consumption experiences, effectively attracting efficiency-conscious and price-sensitive consumers.

Secondly, in terms of innovation, Luckin Coffee has consistently launched new products tailored to young consumers’ tastes. This not only satisfies their pursuit of novelty but also reinforces Luckin Coffee’s brand positioning as a “pioneer.” Since its launch in 2021, the Coconut Latte has sold over 300 million cups [14], becoming a cultural phenomenon. Collaborative innovations like the ‘Moutai Baijiu Latte’ (developed with Kweichow Moutai) achieved record-breaking first-day sales exceeding 5.42 million cups.

Finally, the majority of Luckin Coffee outlets adopt the “quick pick-up” store model. Characterized by compact floor areas and strategic locations in office buildings, commercial districts, and university campuses—areas with high coffee demand—this approach not only enhances operational efficiency but also reduces costs, enabling rapid brand expansion. The combination of competitive pricing and convenient consumption scenarios fulfills daily coffee needs while lowering the entry barrier for consumers. This strategy has successfully attracted price-sensitive customer segments, thereby consolidating its market position.

2.3. Consistency in Visual Language Style

In brand communication, Luckin Coffee has successfully established a distinctive brand identity by maintaining consistent visual styles across multiple touchpoints, including advertising slogans, packaging design, and store décor. These integrated elements collectively contribute to strong brand recognition.

The advertising slogans of Luckin Coffee feature concise and clear designs with a rhythmic structure and modern aesthetic, demonstrating strong memorability and shareability. Taglines such as “Little Blue Cup, Who Could Resist?” “This Cup, Who Could Resist?” and “Morning Coffee, Afternoon Tea” employ repetition and concise phrasing to reinforce brand recognition. Simultaneously, these slogans subtly nurture domestic consumers’ demand for coffee consumption through their culturally resonant messaging. Luckin Coffee’s founder, Qian Zhiya, once explicitly stated, “Creating professional coffee in a fresh style is our product positioning,” emphasizing the brand’s commitment to high quality and convenience [15]. Numerous advertisements further reinforced this brand perception by consistently featuring slogans such as “Master Coffee” and “Fresh, Fast Delivery.” The advertising language not only delivers visual conciseness and impact but also strengthens brand visual identity through the repetitive use of blue-dominant branding elements and design aesthetics.

In terms of color schemes, Luckin Coffee's packaging design primarily adopts blue and white tones, evoking a sense of simplicity and freshness. Visually, the packaging features a unified foundation of brand logos and typography, combined with diverse patterns and color variations. Luckin employs minimalist negative space design and infographic-style information layouts, enhancing the packaging's clarity and enabling consumers to swiftly identify key product details.

The store design of Luckin Coffee adopts a unified stylized concept, maintaining remarkably consistent aesthetics across first-tier, second-tier, and third-tier cities. This approach ensures consumers receive identical visual experiences, thereby reinforcing the brand's image in their minds. The interior decoration employs a blue-and-white color scheme paired with the iconic deer logo, achieving seamless alignment with the brand's packaging and advertising slogans. The store layout prioritizes functionality and user experience, featuring open-plan designs and bright color palettes to create spaces conducive to socialization, relaxation, and conversation. This design philosophy aligns with the coffee consumption needs of Luckin's target audience while enhancing the compatibility between brand culture and consumption scenarios. Furthermore, Luckin strengthens its connection with consumers through contextualized communication in offline stores, leveraging physical spaces as immersive touchpoints to deepen brand-audience relationships. According to data from Narrow Gate Canyon, as of March 10, 2025, Luckin Coffee operated a total of 22,954 stores nationwide, with 33.19% of its outlets located in third-tier and lower-tier cities and 12.95% in township areas, demonstrating its strong appeal in lower-tier markets. These stores have become new social hubs for young people returning to their hometowns, where they gather with friends and enjoy a consumption experience similar to that in first-tier cities. By establishing an extensive network spanning from metropolitan areas to lower-tier markets, Luckin Coffee has forged a distinct brand recognition among consumers.

3. Synergistic Effects: Integrated Communication Channels

The core of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) lies in addressing the increasingly complex media environment that consumers encounter, helping manufacturers gain initiative in information asymmetry [16]. The integration of multiple communication channels can effectively enhance brand communication efficiency and effectiveness. When formulating an integrated marketing communication strategy, brands should deeply analyze the characteristics of each communication channel and its audience distribution, leveraging their strengths and compensating for weaknesses to amplify synergistic effects.

3.1. Multi-Channel Parallelism Facilitating the Development of New Retail Models

By effectively integrating the efficiency and speed of online sales with the scenario-based and service-oriented nature of offline operations, Luckin Coffee has suc-

successfully established an “Internet + New Retail” model. This approach not only enhances brand communication effectiveness and consumer experiences in physical spaces but also expands the brand’s visibility.

In offline stores, Luckin Coffee strategically deploys outlets across multiple cities and locations, covering major commercial districts in China’s first- and second-tier cities. Additionally, it relies on online ordering and offline delivery services to provide convenient pickup and delivery options. Online, the brand leverages its self-developed app and mini-programs to achieve a seamless closed-loop system from order placement to payment. Offline, Luckin Coffee utilizes WeChat’s location-based services to offer personalized information and sales tailored to customers. By analyzing potential consumer distribution through geolocation data, the brand adjusts communication content based on customer movement, thereby enhancing consumer loyalty to the brand [11].

Upon opening the mini-program, users encounter pop-ups prompting them to scan a QR code to join a group for the first time, where they can receive discounts such as a 4.8% off coupon or a 9.9 RMB coffee voucher. Random free coffee coupons are also distributed to incentivize users to scan the corporate WeChat QR code, directing them to join the nearest store’s benefits community based on their location. Through WeChat groups, Luckin Coffee tightly connects users with its stores. These groups not only serve as channels for disseminating the latest promotions and events but also provide a platform for interactive communication. Regular coupon distributions and exclusive activities within these communities foster user engagement and a sense of belonging, thereby deepening reliance on the brand.

Through online platforms tracking users’ behavioral data such as consumption habits, order time slots, and transaction amounts, while also collecting statistics on customer visit frequency, dwell time, and evaluations of store environments and services in physical locations, Luckin Coffee fully integrates and cyclically applies these online and offline data resources to form a closed-loop operation. The effective integration of the data ecosystem not only significantly enhances the operational efficiency of the enterprise but also cultivates user consumption habits, providing reliable support for the accumulation of long-term brand value.

3.2. Multi-Media Parallel Strategy for Building a Brand Marketing Matrix

In the digital era, the social media ecosystem has become a core pillar for the strategic layout of integrated marketing communications in branding. Luckin Coffee leverages mainstream social platforms to construct sales conversion pathways, positioning the WeChat ecosystem as a strategic hub while achieving synergistic resonance across multiple platforms. Currently, Luckin Coffee’s official social media account matrix comprehensively covers key nodes such as WeChat, Weibo, Tiktok, Red Note, and Bilibili, forming a multidimensional and interconnected communication network.

The WeChat ecosystem, with its massive user base and social network dissem-

ination capabilities, has become the cornerstone of Luckin Coffee's private domain operations through its potential for social fission. Luckin fully capitalizes on WeChat's multifunctional features: its mini-program enables convenient order placement, while integrated loyalty points and membership systems strengthen transaction linkages and enhance user retention. Luckin Coffee actively engages in interactive campaigns across multiple platforms, building an omnichannel, multi-tiered brand marketing matrix. A search for "Luckin Coffee" reveals official accounts on all major platforms—WeChat, Weibo, Tiktok, Red Note, and Bilibili—forming a complete social media matrix.

As a vital public traffic pool and social discourse arena, Weibo serves as Luckin's frontline for launching new products and sparking trends. For instance, the 2023 collaboration with Moutai to introduce "Sauce-Aroma Latte," featuring the unique selling point of "each cup containing 53%vol Kweichow Moutai liquor," swiftly became a viral topic on Weibo. This campaign generated over 20 related hashtags, with #Luckin Responds To Drinking Moutai Latte And Driving soaring to the top of trending searches, remaining on the list for over 10 hours and accumulating more than 600 million views. Red Note, renowned for its grassroots recommendation features, acts as a key platform for Luckin to attract young female consumers. Tiktok, with its short-video format and powerful algorithmic recommendations, provides expansive dissemination opportunities. Bilibili, a video community popular among youth, serves as a critical space for Luckin to interact with younger demographics.

As a crucial public domain traffic pool and social opinion field, Weibo serves as the frontline platform for Luckin Coffee to launch new products and create trending topics. For instance, the "Jiangxiang Latte" (Sauce-flavored Latte) co-branded with Moutai in 2023, leveraging its unique selling point of "each cup containing 53% vol. Kweichow Moutai liquor," quickly became a hot topic on Weibo. This collaboration generated over 20 related hashtags on the platform, with #CanYouDriveAfterDrinkingLuckinMoutaiLatte# topping the trending list for over 10 hours and accumulating over 600 million views. Red Note, known for its product recommendation culture, has become a vital platform for Luckin Coffee to attract young female consumers. TikTok, with its short video format and powerful algorithm-driven recommendations, provides extensive reach for the brand's promotions. Bilibili, a video community popular among younger demographics, serves as a key interactive platform for Luckin Coffee to engage with its youthful audience.

3.3. Maximizing Communication Effectiveness through Cross-Border Collaboration

Luckin Coffee expands its young consumer base by collaborating with IPs that align with new product launches and resonate with youth-focused brands. For instance, Black Myth: Wukong, a game predominantly followed by Generation Z aged 24 - 29 [17], generated over 4.5 billion topic views on Weibo, one of its pri-

mary discussion platforms, and dominated trending lists for multiple days. Luckin partnered with the game to launch its new product, “Black Myth Soaring Americano.” The related hashtag #Luckin X Black Myth Wukong# amassed 75.433 million views on Weibo. Prior to the official launch, pre-sales of “Black Myth Soaring Americano” on Luckin’s Tiktok livestream exceeded 100,000 units [18]. Post-launch, the campaign drove new customer transactions to over 50% of total sales on the day, with 46% of purchasers aged 18 - 23 and 19% aged 24 - 30, collectively accounting for 65% of Generation Z consumers.

Cross-border collaborations have not only brought Luckin short-term buzz but also enhanced the brand’s cultural depth and user loyalty. Looking back at Luckin’s marketing history: In 2018, Luckin launched a World Cup limited-edition themed coffee and gave away signed jerseys and cards from football stars through social media comment sections. In 2019, it set up pop-up stores and interactive zones at the Super Strawberry Music Festival, attracting young attendees to check in and take photos. In 2020, Luckin collaborated with trendy artist Zhang Zhazhan’s artwork “Little Monsters”, exclusively launching its artbook and same-design canvas tote bags online. In 2021, the brand sponsored the variety show *Mao Xue Wang* and partnered with writer Feng Tang’s calligraphy and painting exhibition as the exclusive coffee provider. In 2022, Luckin invited the 2021 League of Legends World Championship-winning team EDward Gaming (EDG) to become its “coffee ambassadors” and prepared an EDG-themed store. In 2023 and 2024, Luckin became the official exclusive coffee partner of the Australian Open in China and Southeast Asia, as well as the sole coffee supplier for the Spartan Race.

It is worth mentioning that by 2024, China’s anime and manga market had grown to a staggering 120 billion yuan, becoming one of the largest such markets globally, with its scale continuing to expand [19]. Demonstrating acute awareness of this trend, Luckin Coffee opened its first anime-themed store in Shanghai in January 2025, once again precisely targeting the young consumer base within the anime and manga culture. Collaborative campaigns with various renowned brands and intellectual properties (IPs) significantly amplified Luckin Coffee’s brand buzz, enabling the brand to break through into diverse sectors and continuously reinforce its memorability and topicality in consumers’ minds.

4. Long-Term Relationships: A Consumer-Oriented Approach

The premise of integrated marketing communications is to be consumer- or audience-centric. In an environment characterized by the democratization and openness of information, two-way communication has become critical to fulfilling consumers’ personalized needs. Enterprises need to listen to consumer voices, engage in equal two-way interactions with consumers, and leverage information technology to establish databases that deliver customized information and products, thereby building long-term customer relationships [16]. Under such transformations in the communication environment, brands must not only inte-

grate across communication channels but also deeply align their actions with the core principle of consumer-centricity.

4.1. Social Virality Captures Market Share

Since its inception, Luckin Coffee has keenly captured the immense energy embedded in social platforms, leveraging social fission as a powerful weapon for rapid expansion. Stores do not support manual ordering; instead, QR code ordering signs and mini-program codes are prominently displayed at the front counter to guide customers toward online operations. Simultaneously, the mini-program directs users to download and register for the APP, attracting new users with a “first-cup-free” benefit. After downloading the APP, users can invite friends through a referral bonus system—by sharing Luckin Coffee’s mini-program or links, both parties easily receive free coffee vouchers. Driven by the dual forces of material incentives and social interaction, this campaign rapidly ignited users’ enthusiasm for sharing. For a time, Luckin’s referral links spread like wildfire across social platforms such as WeChat and Weibo.

By leveraging users’ strong relationship networks, Luckin Coffee achieved rapid dissemination of brand information at an extremely low customer acquisition cost. Numerous new users, driven by curiosity and the allure of free coffee, flocked to try Luckin Coffee after seeing shares from friends. After personally experiencing its high-quality products and convenient services, these users spontaneously became Luckin’s ambassadors, continuing to share the brand with more people. This cyclical process allowed Luckin Coffee to successfully harness users’ social networks to achieve dual goals of word-of-mouth marketing and user growth. In the fiercely competitive coffee market, Luckin swiftly carved out a significant market share, laying a broad platform for the brand’s subsequent development.

4.2. Personalized Services Fostering User Habits

Luckin Coffee astutely recognized the Chinese preference for milk tea and introduced coffee beverages such as Coconut Latte and Rich Milk Latte, which feature a sweeter taste and rich milky flavor. By reducing the bitterness of coffee and aligning its flavor profile closer to that of milk tea, Luckin attracted a large number of young consumers who previously did not drink coffee, thereby cultivating the habit of incorporating coffee into daily beverage choices.

Leveraging the parallel operation of its dedicated app and WeChat Mini Program, Luckin Coffee has established direct private domain traffic channels to users, further cultivating their consumption habits. Through the development of digital platforms, Luckin has built a robust user engagement system. Within its mobile Mini Program, the brand offers multiple service modules:

Social Interaction Design: Enhanced sharing features for coupons—for example, when customers share coupons with friends, both parties receive discounts upon successful orders—effectively strengthening social connections among users.

Membership Benefits: Time-limited discount packages are introduced to provide consumers with price incentives during specific periods, fostering sustained consumption motivation.

E-commerce Expansion: The sales channels encompass pre-packaged product lines, including ready-to-drink coffee and instant coffee products, which diversify consumer choices and expand the brand's commercial footprint.

The synergistic collaboration of these business modules addressed consumer needs across diverse scenarios, cultivated stable consumption habits, and ultimately formed a virtuous business ecosystem.

4.3. Differentiated Pricing Strategies for Brand Image Consolidation

On the path of brand image shaping and consolidation, Luckin Coffee first started with brand promotion. The introduction to its official WeChat account reads: "Official benefits + service account, 9.9 yuan every week! Luckin Coffee: China's renowned chain coffee brand; Winner of IIAC International Coffee Tasting Awards Gold Medal for 7 consecutive years; WBC (World Barista Championship) Champion Blend." Luckin simultaneously presents two key messages—high quality and low prices—to users, promoting its high-cost-performance brand image that combines premium coffee with affordability.

In terms of promotional strategies, Luckin does not uniformly adopt low-price tactics to attract customers. Instead, it leverages big data for user profiling to develop differentiated discount plans across different periods. For instance, frequent customers receive "buy five, get five free" promotions, while new or occasional users are targeted with "first cup free" acquisition strategies. Beyond personalized offers for distinct user groups, Luckin consistently distributes weekly 9.9 yuan coffee coupons via its mini-program or app under a unified promotional framework. In collaborative marketing efforts, Luckin actively partners with institutions like Industrial Bank to provide exclusive discounts for bank users, achieving mutual benefits in sales and expanding market reach.

Regarding pricing strategies, Luckin employs promotional campaigns to attract cost-sensitive consumers, effectively meeting the coffee demands of price-conscious demographics. These initiatives have solidified Luckin's reputation as a high-value, quality brand in the market, laying a robust foundation for its long-term development.

4.4. Topic Marketing Emphasizing Emotional Connection

From the perspective of brand communication, Luckin Coffee's emotional connection mechanism constructs a closed-loop interactive system. Through a multi-dimensional user insight mechanism, the brand continuously acquires consumer demand and preference data, deeply integrating it into every stage of brand value delivery, thereby achieving value co-creation between the brand and its audience. Visual presentations enable the new generation of consumers to clearly perceive

the phased breakthrough achievements of Luckin Coffee's brand, while loyal customers further solidify their role as co-creators of the brand. Immersive content experiences activate users' memory touchpoints, continuously strengthening emotional bonds through deepened participatory engagement and a sense of community belonging.

Luckin's emotional connection strategies are also evident in its daily operations. For instance, during Valentine's Day, the brand launched online campaigns where consumers could share content related to themed coffee products on social platforms, participate in draws to win free coffee, and drive viral marketing incentives through such initiatives. Additionally, Luckin designed collaborative fun cards and romantic-themed cup sleeves as peripheral products, creating multi-scenario emotional touchpoints that allow consumers to share romantic moments with loved ones. These interactive activities not only immerse consumers deeply in the brand's communication process but also help Luckin gain deeper insights into consumers' emotional needs and expression habits, achieving profound interaction between customers and the brand. This validates the feasibility of the two-way communication concept in brand communication.

Beyond leveraging special holidays for emotional engagement, Luckin consistently monitors trends and interests among young people, swiftly capitalizing on hot topics and relevant figures to craft targeted campaigns. For example, during the 2024 September back-to-school season, the brand tapped into the popularity of Olympic sprinter Xu Zhuoyi, aligning with his identity as a 2024 freshman at Tongji University for targeted campus marketing. This expanded daily coffee consumption into academic scenarios. When MBTI personality types became a trending discussion among youth, Luckin matched its beverages with different MBTI personalities and designed "New School Year Persona" posters. By cleverly intertwining the brand with youth interests, Luckin further enhanced its influence and affinity among young consumer groups.

5. Conclusions

The Luckin Coffee products discussed in this paper have cultivated a distinctive consumer base in the fiercely competitive market through differentiated product positioning. By continuously optimizing its operational model, the brand has gradually established a unique product matrix system, securing differentiated competitive advantages in the ready-to-drink beverage sector. Leveraging integrated marketing strategies, Luckin Coffee has achieved rapid brand growth and significant market share expansion. A theoretical analysis of its IMC strategies not only deepens the understanding of these approaches but also provides a vivid and persuasive empirical case for validating the applicability and authority of IMC theory in emerging markets and the digital era.

However, this study has certain limitations due to objective constraints. For instance, detailed commercial operational data from Luckin Coffee remains undisclosed, making it challenging to conduct a granular analysis of the company's op-

erational mechanisms. Additionally, the lack of empirical investigations into consumer behavior hinders an in-depth exploration of the specific pathways of strategy implementation and user feedback, leaving the depth of the research limited.

With the growth of Generation Z and their fondness for coffee, in future development strategies, brands can leverage more precise audience targeting technologies to achieve effective integration of multi-channel communication resources. Meanwhile, adopting consumer demand- and experience-driven interactive strategies will help shape a unified and distinctive brand image, enhance the effectiveness of marketing communication, and ultimately build profound and enduring emotional bonds with consumers. Most importantly, given the evolving domestic and international market environments and the constant changes in consumer demands, brand communication strategies must not remain stagnant. They should continuously innovate and optimize in line with the trends of the times, not only to achieve high-quality and sustainable brand development but also to establish a new integrated marketing communications framework centered on digital technologies.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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