

The Influence of Spillover Effect on Consumers' Willingness to Use and the Moderating Effect of Brand

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ABSTRACT: In recent years, more and more consumers take online reviews as an important basis for their consumption choices. This kind of practical experience of comment sharing, when they purchase goods or services, will affect the choice intention of potential consumers. At the same time, a product review may affect consumers' perception of other related products, that is, spillover effect. This paper takes express brands as the research object, and discusses the word-of-mouth (WOM) spillover effect of online reviews among competitive products, that is, the impact on consumers' willingness to use competitive brands, and finally studies the moderating effect of brands.

The results show that both positive and negative online reviews will influence the consumers' intention to use competitive express brand: 1) in terms of consumers' intention to use a competitive brand, positive comments will reduce consumers' choice of its competitive brand, resulting in a negative spillover effect; the opposite is true. 2) Brand moderates the spillover effect brought by online reviews, high brand strength can reduce positive spillover and enhance negative spillover. Therefore, it is particularly important to strengthen the construction of word-of-mouth and effectively manage and analyze online reviews.

KEY WORD: online review; spillover effect; Express brand; consumer choice; brand

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, with the rapid development of e-commerce, the scale of online shopping has been further expanded, various online review systems and word-of-mouth websites have been developed on a large scale, and the number of online reviews has also grown dramatically. According to the relevant data, online reviews are an important basis for consumers' online purchasing decisions (2009). Ninety-three percent of consumers said online reviews influence their shopping decisions. A recent ComScore study (2018) found that most consumers have the habit of reading online reviews regularly, and have a high degree of trust in reviews. When it comes to shopping decisions, these reviews also have full influence. Besides, with the increasing popularity of the Internet, consumers have obtained information that was previously unavailable or difficult to obtain. These product information and reviews help consumers better match their preferences with products, thereby reducing marketers' information asymmetry between consumers and consumers (Labrecque et al., 2013). At the same time, when shopping, consumers are willing to listen to other people's shopping experience, which is why online reviews have become the best commercial marketing tool.

Consumers often choose a product from many similar products to consume (Russell & Petersen, 2000), so the decision will not only consider the final purchase products in the process of information, but carries on the comparison to known related product information, a product information may affect the consumers' perception of other products, to produce information overflow. In recent years, the spillover effect of information has attracted much attention from many scholars, especially the spillover effect of marketing activities (Kumar & Ricky, 2015). For example, Ahluwalia et al. (2001) and Lei et al. (2008) have studied the influencing factors of the spillover effect of negative events. Dahlen et al. (2006) and Roehm et al. (2006) studied the spillover effect of competing brands.

The logistics industry has been developing rapidly. As one of the basic services supporting the development of e-commerce, it is also the link between virtual and real, consumers and enterprises in e-commerce, which has become an important factor restricting the development of the industry. Express, as a kind of logistics behavior, is more focused on a specific field, and the service level of express is attracting more and more attention. In order to closely meet the strategic needs of "One Belt And One Road", the state is implementing the "medium - and long-term plan for the development of logistics industry (2014-2020)", So the

^aComScore, a global Internet information service provider, which is a well-known American Internet Statistics company, Internet traffic tracking analysis company and market research company.

dominant position of the logistics and express industry is increasingly obvious, and the competition between logistics and express enterprises is increasingly intensified. Therefore, it is of great significance to study the spillover effect of online reviews of express brands on consumers' willingness to use. Based that, enterprises can timely adjust their own information according to consumers' online reviews.

Based on the accessibility-diagnostic theory, this article takes the express industry as the research object, discussing the Influence of spillover effect on consumers' willingness to use and the moderating effect of brand. Although online reviews weaken the role of corporate information to a certain extent, they are not the formation of corporate information. As a signal reflecting product quality, brand still plays an extremely important role in consumer decision-making. Liao and Huang(2016) pointed out that online reviews are important clues for consumers to judge product quality, and brand can have an impact on the role of online reviews. On this basis, this article believes that brand may also have an impact on the spillover effect of online reviews, and discusses this impact. When purchasing products, whether consumers obtain information from the enterprise or other consumers, the purpose is to help themselves accurately obtain the true quality of the product, thereby forming varying degrees of willingness to use. The research framework of this article is as follows:

Figure 1: Research Framework

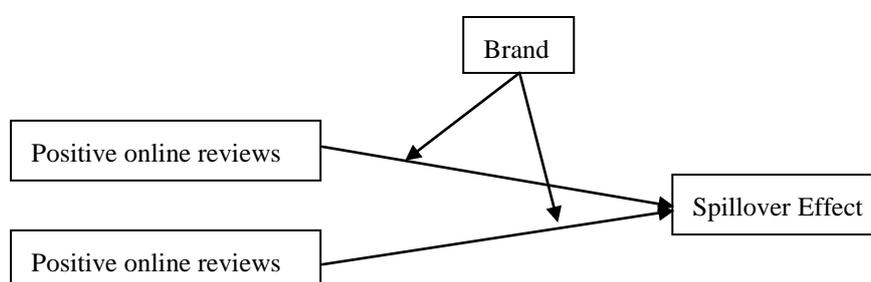


Figure 1 shows the research framework of this article.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH ANALYSIS

Word-of-mouth communication can form consumers' expectations of products and their attitudes before use. Consumers share their personal consumption experience and write reviews for products in various types of social media at any time, and they are increasingly relying on online reviews of other consumers to reduce the uncertainty of their perception of products and make consumption choices. Online reviews of a product may affect consumers' perception of related product information that is not mentioned in it. When the information of a product can be used to diagnose other products, information overflow occurs. Understanding the spillover effect of online word of mouth formed by online reviews plays an important role for merchants to have a more comprehensive understanding of the role of online reviews and to use online word of mouth to attract consumers.

2.1 Spillover effect of express service online reviews

Spillover effect refers to the degree to which consumers' evaluation of one of the related brands changes, while the evaluation of other brands also changes (2006). There are many researches on spillover effects in marketing literature, such as the word of mouth spillover caused by information communication between different media (Kumar & Smith, 2014), spillover between brand scandals (Poehm & Tybout, 2006), the spillover of advertising utility (Ghose, 2003) and so on. Online reviews can provide consumer experience information about products and brands. Due to the similarity of functions of competitive products in the same category, information usually has mutual diagnosis, so its online word-of-mouth may also have spillover effect (Ahluwalia et al., 2001).

"Accessibility and diagnosticity" proposed by Feldman and Lynch (1988) is the theoretical basis for analyzing spillover effect. In short, when consumers associate brand A with brand B, brand B has accessibility to brand A. when consumers evaluate brand B according to brand A, brand A is diagnosable to brand B. when both accessibility and diagnosability are met, consumers can judge competitive brands according to information, the resulting spillover effect. Janakiraman et al. (2009) developed an empirical framework to investigate the positive spillover effects among competing brands in the pharmaceutical field, Eric T. Anderson studied the spillover effects among different product categories (Anderson & Simester, 2013), And Yu Weiping and Zhuang (2013) Ailing studied the spillover effects of negative information in the network context.

Similarly, there is a certain competitive relationship between express brands, because its meet the needs of consumers the same or similar, consumers may associate the information of a product with its competitive brand products. When making consumption choices, other consumers' reviews on a product may cause changes in the perception of potential customers to the relevant brands. Therefore, the increase of online

reviews (WOM) of brand A leads to the increase of their attractiveness, which may make consumers judge that they have higher quality than competitive brand B, thus damaging the relative attractiveness of competitive brand B, which is called positive spillover effect. On the other hand, when consumers' online reviews of brand A is declining, its attractiveness will be reduced. At the same time, consumers may judge that it has lower quality than competitive brand B, thus improving the relative attractiveness of competitive brand B (Anderson & Simester, 2013), which is called negative spillover effect. It should be noted that the positive spillover effect of a brand reflects the reduction of consumers' willingness to use the competitive brand, while the negative spillover effect of a brand reflects the improvement of consumers' willingness to use its competitive brand.

In summary, the spillover effect of positive reviews of a certain express brand negatively affects consumers' willingness to use its competing brands, and the spillover effect of a brand's negative reviews positively affects consumers' willingness to use its competing brands.

2.2 The moderating effect of brand

According to the theory of information economics, brand itself is a signal of quality, and also a diagnostic information. When the brand strength of the product is high, consumers tend to have a good impression on the product, and the brand can resist the inconsistent views of consumers. Liang Danlei (2018) believes that brand image is a further manifestation of customer satisfaction. The literature on product injury crisis in the past also shows that brand can resist negative events to a certain extent. Therefore, the well-known brand itself provides consumers with effective diagnostic information, so that while the strong brand strengthens the spillover effect of positive reviews, it weakens the spillover effect of negative reviews. In other words, the higher the brand strength of a certain express brand, the higher the negative spillover effect generated by the brand's positive reviews, and the lower the positive spillover effect generated by the brand's negative reviews. That is, the lower the tendency of consumers to choose their competitive brands. Conversely, the lower the brand strength of the express brand, the lower the negative spillover effect generated by its positive reviews, and the higher the positive spillover effect generated by negative reviews. That is, consumers have a tendency to choose their competing brands.

In summary, Brand adjusts the spillover effect of online reviews. Firstly, the higher the brand of a certain express brand, the higher the negative spillover effect generated by positive reviews, and the lower the positive spillover effect generated by negative reviews. That is, the lower the tendency of consumers to choose their competing brands. Secondly, The lower the brand of a certain express brand, the lower the negative spillover effect of its positive reviews, and the higher the positive spillover effect of its negative reviews. That is, consumers have a tendency to choose their competing brands;

III. CONCLUSION

Regarding the spillover effect of online reviews, this article concludes as follows: The word-of-mouth spillover effect produced by other consumers' positive reviews on Brand A negatively affects consumers' willingness to use competing brand B. To put it simply, the positive reviews of brand A will make consumers favor the brand instead of choosing its competing brand B, which creates a negative spillover effect; vice versa. Therefore, online reviews are crucial to consumers' choices. Positive reviews of express brands can indirectly expand a company's market share, increase its profitability, and have a negative spillover effect on its competitors. While courier companies improve their own service level and service quality, effective management of online reviews and strong reputation building are also essential!

Regarding the moderating effect of brands, this article concludes as follows: Brands have a moderating effect on the spillover effects of both positive and negative reviews. On the one hand, brand strength can reduce the loss of the company's customers caused by the company's own negative reviews and the overflow of positive information from competing companies; on the other hand, although the advertising strength cannot further increase the impact of positive reviews on consumers' willingness to use, but However, the positive spillover effects brought by the negative reviews of competing companies can be superimposed on the company, thereby enhancing consumers' willingness to use, and thus generating sales revenue.

Online reviews about express brand will not only affect consumers' willingness to use the express service of that brand, but also affect its competing brands through spillover effects. According to such thinking, this paper reviews the positive and negative two aspects, discussing the express brand online reviews spillover effect on consumers' willingness to use, and making certain contribution to the research of Internet word of mouth. Positive reviews about express brand will make consumers favor the brand rather than choose its competitive brand, thus producing a negative spillover effect. And vice versa. Besides, this paper, to a certain extent, increases the research on the impact of online word-of-mouth of competitive brands, and the role of brands in it. Strong brands can reduce the customer loss caused by the positive spillover of competitive enterprises.

For express companies, improving their own brand building can weaken the negative spillover effect brought by the positive reviews of their competitors. At the same time, express enterprises should deal with the negative online reviews of consumers, improve the service quality, encourage consumers to make objective and

positive online reviews, and then minimize the negative spillover effect of competitive enterprises.

Last but not least, this article has strong theoretical significance. To a certain extent, this article adds to the research on the influence of competing brands and the role that the brand plays in it. In the past, most of the literature used brand as a direct factor affecting consumers' willingness to use it. Few literatures used it as a moderating variable for research. This article just made up for this deficiency. The results of the experimental test also show the moderating effect of brand. Although brand strength cannot further increase the influence of positive online reviews on consumers' willingness to use, it can achieve the superposition of positive spillover effects brought by the negative reviews of competing companies. This is of great significance to the study of spillover effects of online reviews. Moreover, this research takes express companies as the empirical research object, combines the brand concept with the actual situation, enriches the research field of express, and points out the direction for future research.

The research conclusions of this article will also have important practical implications for Chinese express delivery companies. First, the express industry is a traditional industry but also an indispensable part of the modern service industry, but the long-standing information asymmetry in the express industry has become a limitation. The rapid development of the Internet has provided opportunities for the express industry; as we all know, the quality of express delivery services has a great impact on the production efficiency of operators and the satisfaction of consumers. It can even be said that the express industry is related to the survival of the e-commerce industry and has become a crucial factor restricting the development of e-commerce. When e-commerce has become an important economic industry, and online shopping has become a part of the lives of most people, express delivery that connects enterprises and users has become a promotion of economic development.

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