Assessing the Impact of We-Media on Marketing: A Case Study of the New Trend of Digital Media

Shuyi Jin

Abstract—**This paper mainly analysis the "We-media" impact on the creation, communication, delivery, and swapping of marketing and strategy, among other things. Additionally, the role of "We-Media" in the contemporary media environment, as well as its impact on the behavior of individuals within that ecosystem, will be examined in this study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the entry of a new trending media type, we-media with the marketing framework and its further applications. It is demonstrated in the mixed models' study, which supports my assertion, that "We-Media" has reprogrammed not only marketing research methodology, but also advertising strategy, which has influenced the marketing process in general.**

Index Terms—**Consumer behavior, we-media & self media, advertising, marketing.**

I. Introduction

We-media (alternatively referred to as self-media) is a new online platform trend. It enables users to write unique articles and broadcast films with their own distinct personalities. According to their content format, we-media platforms can be classed as text-based, video-based, or audio-based [1]. Apart from more traditional kinds of internet media, such as blogs, live streams are gaining popularity as a substitute for traditional forms of internet media. It is feasible to segment the we-media marketing market into performance-based and non-performance-based segments. App marketing, e-commerce marketing, online promotion activities, and HTML 5 content marketing are all examples of activities that fall under the umbrella concept of the performance-based we-media sector.

Indeed, the web has a major influence on marketing techniques across a range of industries. We-media augmented and verified data for marketing research, hence affecting data collection practices throughout the pre-marketing phase. Because we-media can represent not only customer opinion but also professional analysts who have an impact on a business's marketing strategy. Despite this, We-Media is growing into a new kind of advertising called "Grass Planting," which is transforming the post-marketing world.

Marketing is the process by which an organization engages its target audience, develops strong relationships, and adds value in order to receive value in return [1]. The American Marketing Association (AMA) now defines marketing as "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for producing, conveying, delivering, and exchanging items of value to customers, clients, partners, and society at large" [2]. Marketing planning is the process of creating a marketing strategy for a business [2]. A marketing plan can also be used to describe a specific product or the overall marketing strategy of a company. A business's marketing planning process is dictated by its overall business strategy. Thus, marketing operations are incorporated when top management creates the firm's strategic direction/mission.

The research question in this study is as follows: how does we-media impact marketing and marketing planning? The objectives of the given research area: 1) To learn the previous and current experience of similar phenomena and roots of the we-media concept; 2) To learn currently available data about we-media, or self-media and its influence on people; 3) To survey relevant audience so as to collect sufficient, credible, empirically confirmed knowledge as a background for the development of inferences and insights; 4) To provide a holistic perspective on the nature of this phenomenon, its impact on marketing and society.

II. The Effect of We-Media on Marketing

A. We-Media Influences Consumers

To start with, it is relevant to highlight that impact of media on individual buyers was highlighted and explored years ago. For instance, Zengotita highlights that the media has the power to shape the world around, the way to live in it, and the priorities people should be guided by [3]. To be more precise, the author claims that the media shapes the mind, and the mind, in its turn, shapes reality. Evidently, such a connection is directed and nurtured by marketing. Moreover, the communication of news is changing [4].

We-media, or self-media, encompasses formats such as influencing through a blog and brand promotion, vlogs, and live streaming. This is all about identity alteration and expression [5]. These forms are particularly popular in China's fashion, car, and accessory industries. Xia outlines six primary revenue streams for we-media: "advertising, paid reading, membership, profit-sharing model, e-commerce, and derivative service" [6]. Unlike traditional media that requires several steps and channels for format creators to reach general audiences [Fig. 1], we-media could not only directly have dual-communication among audiences. Furthermore, the audiences would also become the format creators [Fig. 2]. Although platforms for promoting lifestyles, specific products, and services are numerous, TikTok [7] and Alibaba dominate the market. It's particularly noteworthy that such formats, particularly live streaming, are gaining popularity over time and are in demand even in luxury segments with high profit margins. Wade and Shan acknowledge that TikTok is China's first globally successful app, and Alibaba

followed suit. As a matter of facts, apps such as TikTok and other online streaming channels provides not only the online flux but also new area of employments. The growth for we-media related jobs almost reaches 270 billion within three years [7]. Cheng emphasizes that the success of online platforms is based on the chances they provide, which is another aspect of the enigma surrounding we-media's dual role as an influencing agent and a business endeavor [8]. The latter is critical in that it establishes a link between money and fame as primary motivators and attractive characteristics of the audience. As a result, we-media is a wonderful choice for e-commerce businesses looking to sell their items and gain notoriety, feedback, and consumer loyalty.
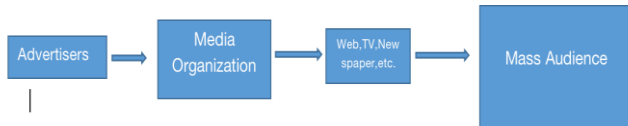

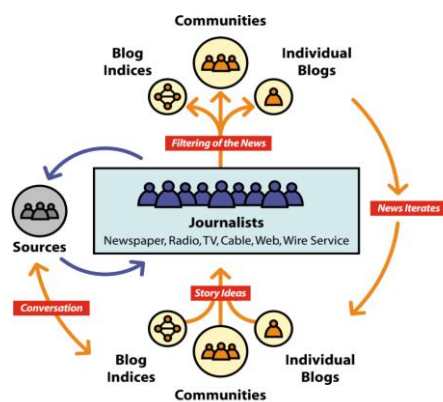Fig. 1. Tradition broadcast media structure.
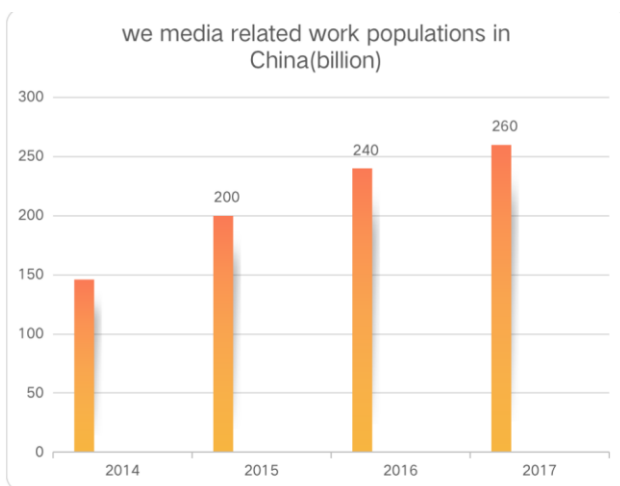

Fig. 2. The new evolving media.

Fig. 3. Chinese we-media related works.

B. We-Media Influences Business

The following section of this study discusses chances for expanding business initiatives, such as new apps launched to the market. Taobao and Xiaohongshu are outstanding examples of how we-media's potential aided in the effective promotion of fresh apps to their current degree of widespread popularity. This factor is inextricably tied to the influence of social media on both the target audience and marketing. On the one hand, while people believe their guides in the news media, they literally choose to make one venture successful due to adequate information coverage, promotion, and

opportunities to try it out among the abundance of alternatives available nowadays, while the other venture may be equally effective and/or simple to use but suffers from poor marketing. On the other hand, this is a point at which we-media has an impact on marketing and marketing planning, in the sense that marketing experts should not only be aware of the potential of we-media, its leaders, and relevant forms of collaboration with them, but also incorporate them into marketing strategies by allocating sufficient space, effort, and spending to them. Otherwise, marketing outcomes may suffer if we do not demonstrate active use and interest in this type of product or service through our media. The degree of trust in we-media, as well as the habit of aligning one's own choices with those highlighted by we-media authorities, are determined by the image of we-media as "individual media" or "citizen media" and leading associations such as democracy and sincerity, reality and prioritization, which resonate strongly with contemporary society.

C. We-Media Influences the Reality

Having analyzed different sources on the issue of concern, it becomes evident that marketing no longer reflects the reality, but rather determines its next shape, direction, and leading values by means of creation of stories, legends, myths that are contemporary and, at the same time, archetypal, and, therefore, well known for people. The latter aspects may be indeed a bottom line that makes we-media phenomenon so special, popular effective nowadays. According to the theory of Jung, there are archetypes that are used actively not only in psychology but also in marketing and business. These archetypes represent a particular image of the character that is intuitively perceived and comprehended by an individual, regardless of their background, ethnicity, and race, sometimes even educational background [9]. These archetypes were used in ancient myths and legends, and keep their influence on humankind nowadays as well, although, appear in a more modern or adjusted version. Basically, these archetypes are used in books, films, and life scenarios. Nowadays, they are effectively employed and diversified in the media scope as well, and we-media is one of the numerous transformations the theory faces nowadays. To be more precise, celebrities and influencers always employ an archetype in their brand and often use storytelling to deliver the value and main senses. Storytelling became a new priority in marketing several years ago [9] and keeps this position currently as well. It has an overwhelming power of a tale, and we-media uses it smartly and effectively.

D. We-Media Influences the Marketing Direction

It is critical to mention how we-media has altered the nature and methods of marketing. To be more specific, Yang points out that the vast amount of information available in today's digital age leads to an excessive number of options for customers to choose from, and that "the brand no longer controls the relationship with its customers, but rather the opposite: customers' increased awareness means they are more demanding" [10]. As a result, it is wise and effective for firms to "be more proactive in improving their marketing effectiveness in connection with digitalization" [10]. As a result, digital media provides a wonderful chance for companies to collaborate with influencers, key opinion

leaders (KOLs), and key opinion leaders (KOCs) to promote their products or service through customer-generated original content [11].

III. BENEFITS AND IMPLICATIONS

A. Build up Relationship between Company and Consumer

As a result of this research, the following major conclusion can be drawn constructive use of we-media, or self-media, is indeed an innovative instrument that the contemporary young generation employs to build relationships with the audience, the products, and each other, in order to increase marketing efficiency in terms of sales and trend creation. To properly include this instrument in marketing planning, it is necessary to grasp the fundamental mechanisms and triggers that contribute to the strength and effectiveness of social media. As a result of the research process and data analysis, the conclusion was reached that we-media in general, and live streaming, is so effective because it generates an effect of co-experience. To be more specific, when celebrities or influencers demonstrate something to them, such as unpacking or traveling, people can have an emotional reaction.

B. Trigger Positioning

There is also a mechanism that is activated by technological improvement and is associated with the success of the we-media phenomena. To be more specific, the present hi-tech epoch allows for much closer contact with celebrities, influencers, and micro-bloggers who use media to actualize their mission, beliefs, and vision, as opposed to previous generations. Many people have a great and deep want to be able to get closer to an icon, a powerful or renowned person, and this has been a strong and profound yearning for generations. This is essential to the success of magazines and television programs that cover celebrities, their lives, happiness, and tragedy. People can now cross so many boundaries and witness daily activities, routine, and special events thanks to personal blogs written by those who fundamentally shape the influence of proclaimed values, priorities, and lifestyle that their target audience adheres to as a result of the media we have today (Bowman & Willis). Both stages of research lead to the following important conclusion: people want closer interaction and in-depth insights into the lives, thoughts, and emotions of celebrities and influencers; this striving is embedded in the bottom of we-media strategy, which uses it to influence these people, create trends and needs, and promote them in order for others to follow, buy, or imitate them. All of these processes are aided by the power of archetypes and the storytelling tactics that we as a society employ in media. A network of connections, causes, and results of this nature produces a circle of contacts that individuals require on a fundamental level. Many people want and require to be led, guided, and influenced by their icons, and these icons are also chosen willingly at first sight when looking at them, but when looking deeper, their choice is influenced by powerful psychological triggers and strategies that are used in every form of mass media communication.

C. Education Tools

The next significant impact that we-media can have is that it can be used as a market education tool. To be more specific, many people are becoming makers and advocates of their own we-media, and they are transitioning from being watchers and those who require guidance to being guides themselves. Psychologists believe that humans can only progress through imitation, which explains why we-media have such a beneficent ability to empower people. Even though this is a generalized idea of how a newborn grows and learns, it has been shown to be effective in broader and more complex circumstances. Essentially, this is the way children learn, and as a result, adults learned how to learn throughout their 20s, 30s, and 40s through the use of mass media and the internet. As a result, there is also an educational influence in the given occurrence to a certain level, as previously stated. Indeed, the news media could be used as an efficient educational medium for businesses seeking to bring new ideas or products to the market. Many modern products and thought-provoking projects are developed in the online media space, promoted there, and ultimately thrive as a result of the tremendous opportunity to communicate knowledge and values with millions of people in a matter of seconds.

D. Negative Influences

On the other side, there is a significantly opposite effect on people that is produced by the media in general and by we-media, namely, a negative effect on the stock market. This suggests that the news media could be used as a weapon to not only promote the market but also to depreciate the technologies that are being promoted. This is a distressing element that affects people all around the world and is becoming more urgent with each passing year and with the advent of new technological devices. Because people lack the ability to distinguish between fact and fiction in the media, they may be easily misled by the contexts produced by others who are just interested in gaining benefits. And we continue to lack sufficient norms or rules to monitor the development of the we-media without interfering with the freedoms of individuals in today's society. As a result, the media can be a detrimental factor in the success of marketing campaigns.

E. Business and Marketing Purposes

Everything discussed about we-media above and its impact on individuals, whether they are existing or potential clients, implies that they are helpful for business and marketing purposes. we-media shape marketing planning and strategies, and this is a paradigm shift insofar as the important point in the given context is a correct and intelligent selection of influencers to transmit the concept, the product, or the service to the public is concerned. As a result, marketing strategy is based on social media analytics, which provides information on the preferences, values, and priorities of the target audience as expressed and identified through their participation in social media networks. It is also necessary to conduct research on the most effective triggers and advertising formats available. we-media involves honesty, storytelling, and values, and marketing positioning must be aligned with the archetype and priorities of the company and the archetype and values of the influencers who are creating we-media material for public relations purposes. As a result,

the content may be viewed as contrived, insincere, and arrogant, and the dangers in such a case include not only financial expenses but also reputational damage and the threat of continued interaction with customers. If the media broadcasts unfavorable feedback, the same dangers may arise. However, the impact of the latter can be lessened by providing a constructive, prompt, and intelligent response to the problem and finding a solution to it.

F. Simplified the Marketing Process

Previous stages of marketing businesses were comparatively simpler because they simply included the availability of high-quality products, however, today's effective marketing involves larger and more critical investments to be successful. In light of the fact that social media algorithms are constantly evolving and changing, marketing planning becomes more difficult and the outcomes become more difficult to predict as well as plan properly, and that the internet is increasingly appearing to be one of the most relevant and effective ways for marketers to reach their potential customers and loyal audience, The marketing planning, and strategy should take into consideration and benefit from interactions and relationships between the brand and the target audience, building relationships with customers, communicating values and meaningful plots through advertisements, branding elements, and product design, and incorporating social media into the marketing mix.

G. Shape Budget Plans

While effective marketing is heavily reliant on positioning and strategy, as well as on the available budget, it must also be adaptable in order to be successful in today's world, given the way the internet has changed the industry, and strategies that do not work should be replaced with alternative ones as soon as possible. Furthermore, marketing strategy should always take into account new trends and priorities, and it should respond to these changes as quickly as possible. At the end of the day, metrics should be analyzed effectively because being present on live streaming or receiving likes on a video does not always imply effectiveness, while experts still require figures to measure and understand the results of their collaboration with we-media representatives, and this becomes one of the most difficult issues to deal with 3.8 Turn consumers into creators

H. Turn Consumers into Creators

We-media enable businesses to transform their customers into contributors and creators to skip the process for innovation by themselves [12]. It could be virtually difficult for companies to foresee the altering demands of their consumers; these firms could instead develop tools and frameworks from we-media to enable their customers to create for themselves. The "Customer as creator" strategy is proving successful in several different industries. Nestlé has developed a toolbox that lets its customers create their own flavors using its ingredients. Customers may use GE's Web-based tools to create better plastic goods, which are available for purchase. The new use of we-media has completely changed the semiconductor industry, resulting in a custom chip market worth more than $15 billion dollars we-media format has already represented the decision from

consumers and their needs so that the firms do not have to spend resources on their own, instead, they could directly collect the results from we-media and shape them into products.

I. Fostering Target Communities

It's crucial for companies' marketing plans that each of we-media influencers attracts a certain set of people with comparable interests [13]. The term "Bimmers" was coined by BMW owners and fans in the automotive sector and is now used all over the internet. No matter where you hang out online, whether it's Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or YouTube, every Bimmer has a discussion group of their own. There are social media influencers that are dedicated to introducing the BMW spirit and how much fun it is to drive one. These social media gurus would then establish communities by gathering their followers. These groups will be the first to respond whenever BMW announces a new model. These kinds of communities have a large number of first-time and second-time purchasers. As a result, BMW was able to market its products while simultaneously collecting feedback, making changes, and building customer loyalty. As a result, many businesses have adopted a new marketing approach in which they act as if they are a typical creator of online media and offer engaging material to attract potential customers. Once communities reach a certain size, it's easy to reap the advantages and build a customer base that's accurate.

IV. CONCLUSION

To summarize, we-media do absolutely have an impact on marketing and strategy, both positively and negatively. This article demonstrates the premise that we-media provide more avenues for bridging the gap between businesses and customers and facilitating communication between various parties. Marketing research and strategy development, which includes data collection, analysis, positioning, advertising, and market education. After gaining an understanding of the impact of social media on marketing and its target audience, it becomes easier to investigate and comprehend how social media influences marketing planning and strategy. To be more exact, this knowledge was required for in-depth analysis of the alterations generated by this phenomenon within the marketing realm. As a result, primary research was incorporated into the study of the aforementioned difficulties, specifically, how the media modifies and adjusts marketing tactics, positioning, and advertising.

V. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH:

The current endeavor addressed only a subset of the influences ranging from social media to marketing; however, other challenges and concerns could be raised for future research. At a theological level, future studies could generate more hypotheses about how we as media might approach marketing in the future, rather than focusing exclusively on what has already occurred. At a more practical level, future studies might collect and analyze new trending digital marketing organizations and their operating tactics to gain a better understanding of digital marketing via social media. Additionally, there are a plethora of negative consequences

that our media might have on marketing and strategy. For example, future research could examine how a competitor could manipulate the news media to create a public relations issue or distort the truth in order to gain market share. Additional research may uncover additional evidence to support the detrimental consequences on the company.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Shuyi Jin contributes the whole paper.

REFERENCES

[1] S. Bowman and C. Willis, *We Media — How Audiences Are Shaping the Future of News and Information*, 2013.

[2] W. Alderson, *Marketing Behavior and Executive Action: A Functionalist Approach to Marketing Theory*, 1957.

[3] T. Zengotita, *Mediated: How the Media Shapes Your World and the Way You Live in It*, Paw Prints/Baker & Taylor, 2010.

[4] L. Liang. "Research on the influence of we-media news dissemination on traditional news communication," in *Proc. 2018 International Conference on Arts, Linguistics, Literature and Humanities (ICALLH 2018)*, 2018.

[5] A. Asmolov and A. Gregory, "From we-media to i-media: Identity transformations in the virtual world: Semantic Scholar," *Semantic Scholar*, 2009.

[6] S. Xia, "A study on the profit model of we media in China," *Global Media Journal*, 2017.

[7] W. Michael and J. Shan. (2019). TikTok-China's First Globally Successful App. Businesstimes.com.sg. [Online]. Available: https://sodacity.net/system/files/Willis-and-Bowman_We-Media-Ch1

[8] Y.-Q. Zhu and H.-G. Chen, "Social media and human need satisfaction: Implications for social media marketing," *Business Horizons*, vol. 58, issue 3, 2015.

[9] T. Lawson, "Archetypes and the collective unconscious," *Carl Jung, Darwin of the Mind*, pp. 75-120, 2018.

[10] S. Yang, "We-media as a marketing tool for fashion business in China," *Theseus*, p. 41, 2020.

[11] K. A. Whitler, "3 reasons why storytelling should be a priority for marketers," *Forbes, Forbes Magazine*, 16 July 2018

[12] C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Routledge, 2014.

[13] S. Yuen, "Chinese social media to remove "self-media" accounts spreading misleading financial info," *Marketing Interactive*, 30 Aug. 2021.

Shuyi Jin was born in China on March 4th, 1994. The author obtained his master degree of global business from Pepperdine University, Los Angeles, USA in 2021 and bachelor degree of communication from University of Washington, Seattle USA in 2017.

His working experience including working as the director of marketing of Blueview in Chengdu, China from Jan. 2020 until now and the project manager of EDI media in Los Angeles US from July 2017 to Aug. 2018. His current research interests are digital marketing and marketing strategies.

Mr. Jin was honored with Global Business Certificate from Pepperdine University.