

Marketing Strategy of Apple in the Chinese

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Abstract: With the development of science and technology and the increasing frequency of international exchanges, globalization has become an irreversible trend. As one of the largest developing countries in the world, China has gradually occupied a pivotal position in the global market with its huge market size, rich resources and increasing economic strength. This paper analyzes Apple's marketing strategy from the perspective of consumers, aiming to explore the reasons for its success and its impact on consumer behavior, and to study the use of 4P marketing theory, 4C marketing theory, integrated marketing theory and consumer behavior theory as a framework to comprehensively evaluate Apple's marketing performance in different dimensions. Apple has successfully attracted and maintained a large number of loyal consumers through precise product positioning, innovative pricing strategies, extensive distribution channels, and effective promotional methods. It has also played a key role in improving brand image and user satisfaction. It also provides companies with optimization. Its marketing strategy provides valuable reference and puts forward guidance and suggestions to help companies better understand and respond to market challenges, and provide reference and enlightenment for other companies

Keywords: Apple, marketing strategy, consumer, 4P, 4C

1. Introduction

Cai, Q., & Chen, S. (2024) This paper will deeply analyze Apple's marketing strategy in the Chinese market. Starting from its product positioning, pricing strategy, promotion activities and other dimensions, it will use 4P marketing theory to compare and analyze the competitive advantages and disadvantages of Apple's mobile phone sales in the Chinese market. 4C theory emphasizes that enterprises should first pay attention to the needs and desires of consumers from the perspective of consumers, focus on the total cost of consumers buying and using products, including the cost of time, energy, transportation, etc., to help companies better price and design products[1].

The purpose of this paper includes the following aspects:

(1) Understand Apple's brand positioning and image-building strategies in the Chinese market, reveal how Apple maintains its high-end brand image in a highly competitive market, and attract target consumers, and evaluate how these strategies can enhance the competitiveness of products in the Chinese market. Meet the needs of local consumers.

(2) Analyze Apple's pricing strategy in the Chinese market and its impact on sales and brand image, after-sales service and customer support strategy in the Chinese market, reveal the role of after-sales service and customer support in improving customer satisfaction and brand loyalty, and how Apple finds a balance between high-end brand positioning and price-sensitive consumer demand.

(3) to understand the Chinese consumer demand for Apple products, purchase motivation, preferences and behavior, to meet the specific needs and expectations of local consumers, so as to increase market share, to provide a basis for the optimization of products and services

(4) To study the decision-making process and its influencing factors of Chinese consumers when purchasing Apple products, to reveal the considerations of consumers in brand choice, product choice and purchase behavior, to evaluate the loyalty and satisfaction of Chinese consumers to Apple brand, to understand the real feelings of consumers on Apple products and services, in order to optimize customer relationship management.

(5) Collect and analyze the experience and feedback of Chinese consumers in the process of using Apple products and services, and help Apple improve product design and service processes by understanding the actual use experience of consumers, discovering the advantages and disadvantages of products and services.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical basis

With the rapid development of the Chinese market and changes in consumer demand, Apple's marketing strategy shows a new trend. Based on the analysis of integrated marketing theory and customer loyalty theory, its success factors include

the integration of advertising, public relations, promotion and other channels to convey brand value, and enhance consumer purchase intention and loyalty. In addition, Philip Kotler's marketing theory in Marketing Management, as well as Don Schultz's integrated marketing theory, provide a theoretical framework for understanding Apple's strategy[2].

2.2 The development process of marketing theory.

Marketing from the beginning of the 20th century from the economics of independence, and in the 1950 s to the management paradigm of its theory has experienced germination, formation, development and perfection, differentiation and expansion of the stage. The change of market environment promotes the adjustment of enterprise marketing practice, and then promotes the development of theory.

Especially in the United States, the development of marketing theory is divided into six stages: germination, functional research, formation and consolidation, management orientation, collaborative development and differentiation and expansion. Market-oriented enterprises gain competitive advantage through in-depth understanding of customers, markets and competitors, flexible use of information technology to guide strategy, and maintain a keen sense of market trends[3].

2.3 Factors affecting consumer behavior

With the development of social economy, the high pricing of Apple products has shaped the image of high-end brands, but it also makes some consumers hesitate when comparing prices. Through market segmentation, Apple divides consumers into groups such as young people, business people and technology enthusiasts, and launches targeted products and services to meet different needs[4].

Family structure has a significant impact on consumption behavior, such as the different consumption preferences of single and married consumers, as well as families with children. The reputation and service level of manufacturers also directly affect consumer trust and purchase decisions.

Apple focuses on the integration of online and offline channels to enhance shopping convenience and brand trust through online booking and offline pickup. At the same time, Apple continues to innovate and upgrade its products to maintain product competitiveness, attracting a large number of consumers who pay attention to new technologies[5].

3. Research Methods

3.1 Consumer Group Survey

In this paper, a questionnaire is developed for different consumer groups in the Chinese market (e. g., by age, income, scene, occupation, etc.) to study their behavioral characteristics and consumption habits. Develop targeted marketing strategies to meet the needs of different consumer groups.

Collect information about Apple's marketing strategies and innovative products in the Chinese market, and learn some marketing strategies for Apple to enter the Chinese market through the Apple China Enterprise Report. For example, Apple will subdivide according to the age range of users in the Chinese market[6]. Through in-depth analysis of these different consumer groups, we will better understand their behavior characteristics and consumption habits, including their purchase motivation, purchase frequency purchase channels, usage habits, etc[7].

3.2 Questionnaire survey

Table 1. Frequency analysis table

Name	Options	Frequency	Percentage%
1. Your gender	Male	106	49.302
	Female	109	50.698
2. Your age	45 years and above	21	9.767
	35-44 years old	46	21.395
	18-24 years old	60	27.907
	25-34 years old	88	40.930
	Third-tier cities and below	43	20.000
3. Your city is	First-tier cities (such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen)	66	30.698
	second-tier cities	106	49.302

Name	Options	Frequency	Percentage%
4. Your monthly income	15000 yuan and above	13	6.047
	10000-14999 yuan	34	15.814
	3000-5999 yuan	44	20.465
	Below 3000 yuan	60	27.907
	6000-9999 yuan	64	29.767
	Other	4	1.860
5. Your occupation is	Management personnel	7	3.256
	Freelancers	10	4.651
	medical and health work	14	6.512
	Educators	14	6.512
	professional technical work	22	10.233
	Students	53	24.651
Do you own Apple products?	Enterprise Staff	91	42.326
	No	46	21.395
	Yes	169	78.605

Using frequency analysis is used to study the distribution of fixed data, select the frequency and percentage of the analysis results as shown in the figure above.

Multi-choice analysis, analysis of the proportion of multiple-choice selection, etc.; response rate is used to compare the relative proportion of each option.

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used to analyze whether the proportional distribution was uniform for each option of multiple-choice questions. From the above table, it can be seen that the goodness-of-fit test shows significance ($\chi^2 = 311.214$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), which means that the selection ratio of each item has obvious difference[8].

Table 2. Summary table of response rates and penetration rates

9. What is the main reason why you buy Apple products?	Response		Penetration rate (n = 215)
	n	response rate	
Brand influence	147	24.92 percent	68.37 percent
Product quality	188	31.86 percent	87.44 percent
innovative technology	111	18.81 percent	51.63 percent
After-sales service	26	4.41 percent	12.09 percent
Price Promotion	116	19.66 percent	53.95 percent
Other	2	0.34 percent	0.93 percent
Summary	590	100 percent	274.42 percent

Note: $\chi^2 = 258.237$ $p = 0.000$ in goodness-of-fit test

The chi-square goodness-of-fit test was used to analyze whether the proportional distribution was uniform for each option of multiple-choice questions.

From the above table, it can be seen that the goodness-of-fit test is significant ($\chi^2 = 258.237$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), which means that the selection ratio of each item is significantly different, which can be seen specifically by comparing the difference in response rate or penetration rate.

Among the main reasons for buying Apple products, the response rate and penetration rate of brand influence, product quality, innovative technology, price promotion are significantly higher.

Description analysis is used to study the overall situation of quantitative data, through the average or skewness and other information to describe the overall situation of the data, from table 3 can be seen: the absolute value of the kurtosis is less than 3, the current data distribution flat state is approximately normal distribution. The skewness is all around 0, and the current data distribution is approximately normally distributed[9].

Table 3. Descriptive statistical results

Variable name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Product Strategy	1.000	5.000	3.592	1.093	-0.684	-0.842
Price Strategy	1.000	5.000	3.609	1.233	-0.929	-0.320
Channel Strategy	1.000	5.000	3.831	0.948	-1.156	0.298
Promotion Strategy	1.000	5.000	3.619	1.178	-0.727	-0.716
customer demand	1.000	5.000	3.567	1.094	-0.720	-0.798
Purchase convenience	1.333	5.000	3.874	0.922	-1.130	0.233
Customer Communication	1.000	5.000	3.737	1.033	-1.038	0.322
Purchase Intention and Behavior	1.000	5.000	3.698	1.013	-0.947	-0.343

The statistical results reveal that the average scores (mean) for various marketing and customer experience dimensions primarily cluster between 3.5 and 3.9, suggesting a moderately positive to good evaluation by respondents regarding firms' performance in these areas. Notably, channel strategy and purchase convenience achieved higher mean values (3.831 and 3.874, respectively), highlighting enterprises' effectiveness in selecting appropriate product distribution channels and providing a convenient purchasing experience. The degree of score dispersion, indicated by standard deviation, is relatively low (≤ 1.233), with channel strategy and purchasing convenience exhibiting even smaller deviations (0.948 and 0.922, respectively), affirming the consistent and widely recognized performance in these sectors. While product strategy, pricing strategy, and customer demand have slightly lower mean values, their standard deviations remain small, pointing to stable yet improvable performance. The promotional strategy's mean (3.619) aligns with product and pricing strategies but has a slightly larger standard deviation (1.178), indicating varied customer perceptions and acceptance, necessitating further optimization. Similarly, customer communication and purchase intention and behavior have high mean values with moderate standard deviations, indicating good performance with room for enhancement[10].

3.3 Analysis of effectiveness and credibility

3.3.1 Reliability analysis

The Cronbach coefficient (Cronbach alpha) is an indicator of the reliability of questionnaires and is widely used in the analysis of empirical data.

When the Cronbach alpha value of the scale designed by the questionnaire is lower than 0.7, it means that the internal consistency of the variables of the scale is poor, and the scale needs to be re-compiled. When the Cronbach alpha value of the scale is higher than 0.7, the internal consistency of several variables constructed by the scale is good. If the Cronbach alpha value of the scale is higher than 0.9, the internal consistency of the variables designed by the scale is excellent.

In addition, this study adopts Corrected Item-Total Correlation (CITC) to measure the reliability of individual problem items. In the study, a problem item should be deleted when the following two conditions are met:(1) the overall correlation coefficient CITC of a problem item is less than 0.4;(2) the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale after deleting the problem item is greater than the value of the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the corresponding dimension.

The results of the reliability analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Reliability Analysis

	Strategy	Revised term and total correlation	Delete Cronbach Alpha after entry	Cronbach Alpha
Product Strategy	Product Strategy 1	0.675	0.732	0.813
	Product Strategy 2	0.674	0.735	
	Product Strategy 3	0.644	0.764	
Price Strategy	Price Strategy 1	0.689	0.689	0.816
	Pricing Strategy 2	0.689	0.689	
	Channel Strategy 1	0.507	0.715	
Channel Strategy	Channel Strategy 2	0.577	0.634	0.737
	Channel Strategy 3	0.604	0.601	
	Promotion Strategy 1	0.610	0.610	
Promotion Strategy	Promotion Strategy 2	0.610	0.610	0.757

	Strategy	Revised term and total correlation	Delete Cronbach Alpha after entry	Cronbach Alpha
customer demand	Customer Needs 1	0.679	0.736	0.815
	Customer demand 2	0.626	0.787	
	Customer needs 3	0.699	0.713	
Purchase convenience	Ease of purchase 1	0.509	0.708	0.736
	Convenience of purchase 2	0.607	0.592	
	Purchase convenience 3	0.567	0.644	
Customer Communication	Customer Communication 1	0.581	0.581	0.735
	Customer Communication 2	0.581	0.581	
Purchase Intention and Behavior	Purchase Intention and Behavior 1	0.661	0.800	0.839
	Purchase Intention and Behavior 2	0.692	0.786	
	Purchase Intention and Behavior 3	0.675	0.794	
	Purchase Intention and Behavior 4	0.654	0.803	

The results show that the Cronbach alpha coefficient corresponding to the product strategy variable is 0.813, the Cronbach alpha coefficient corresponding to the price strategy variable is 0.816, the Cronbach alpha coefficient corresponding to the channel strategy variable is 0.737, the Cronbach alpha coefficient corresponding to the promotion strategy variable is 0.757, the Cronbach alpha coefficient corresponding to the customer demand variable is 0.815, and the Cronbach alpha coefficient corresponding to the purchase convenience variable is 0.736, the Cronbach alpha coefficient value corresponding to the customer communication variable is 0.735, and the Cronbach alpha coefficient value corresponding to the purchase intention and behavior variable is 0.839. The Cronbach alpha coefficient value of each variable is greater than 0.7. At the same time, the CITC value of each item and the Cronbach alpha value of deleted items meet the research requirements, indicating that the stability of each variable in the questionnaire is high and the reliability basically passes the test.

3.3.2 Validity and factor analysis

Validity test is the process of evaluating the validity of the questionnaire, and whether the measurement tool can accurately measure the validity of the target includes content validity, criterion validity and construct validity. The validity of the construct was extracted by factor analysis to test whether the design structure of the questionnaire was established.

KMO and Bartlett sphericity tests were performed before factor analysis. The closer the KMO value is to 1, the stronger the correlation between variables and the more suitable the data for factor analysis; Bartlett test significance less than 0.05 indicates that it is suitable for factor analysis. In general, $KMO > 0.7$ meets the factor analysis requirements.

Through SPSS analysis, significance is less than 0.05 and $KMO > 0.8$, high validity; 0.70.8, good validity 0.60.7, acceptable validity;< 0.6, poor validity.

Table 5. Inspection of KMO and Bartlett

KMO value	0.818
Bartlett sphericity test	Approximate chi-square
	df
	p-value
	1813.969
	231.000
	0.000

Using factor analysis for information enrichment research, first analyze whether the research data is suitable for factor analysis, as can be seen from the table above: KMO is 0.818, greater than 0.6, to meet the prerequisite requirements of factor analysis, meaning that the data can be used for factor analysis research. And the data passed the Bartlett sphericity test ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the study data are suitable for factor analysis.

Table 6. Inspection of KMO and Bartlett

Factor Number	Characteristic root			Rotation forward difference interpretation rate			Rate of variance interpretation after rotation		
	Characteristic root	Variance interpretation rate%	Cumulative%	Characteristic root	Variance interpretation rate%	Cumulative%	Characteristic root	Variance interpretation rate%	Cumulative%
1	6.251	28.414	28.414	6.251	28.414	28.414	2.726	12.390	12.390
2	1.911	8.687	37.101	1.911	8.687	37.101	2.236	10.164	22.554
3	1.664	7.561	44.662	1.664	7.561	44.662	2.031	9.231	31.786

Factor Number	Characteristic root			Rotation forward difference interpretation rate			Rate of variance interpretation after rotation		
	Characteristic root	Variance interpretation rate%	Cumulative%	Characteristic root	Variance interpretation rate%	Cumulative%	Characteristic root	Variance interpretation rate%	Cumulative%
4	1.500	6.818	51.480	1.500	6.818	51.480	1.624	7.380	39.166
5	1.419	6.451	57.931	1.419	6.451	57.931	2.193	9.967	49.133
6	1.234	5.610	63.542	1.234	5.610	63.542	2.044	9.289	58.422
7	1.138	5.175	68.717	1.138	5.175	68.717	1.656	7.526	65.948
8	1.086	4.938	73.654	1.086	4.938	73.654	1.695	7.707	73.654
9	0.646	2.937	76.591						
10	0.587	2.668	79.259						
11	0.548	2.490	81.749						
12	0.514	2.337	84.086						
13	0.458	2.084	86.170						
14	0.448	2.037	88.206						
15	0.426	1.937	90.144						
16	0.394	1.791	91.934						
17	0.359	1.630	93.564						
18	0.330	1.501	95.065						
19	0.307	1.398	96.463						
20	0.288	1.307	97.770						
21	0.266	1.208	98.978						
22	0.225	1.022	100.000						

The above table analyzes the factor extraction and the amount of factor extraction information. From the above table, it can be seen that a total of 8 factors are extracted by factor analysis, and the characteristic root values are all greater than 1. The variance explanation rates of these 8 factors after rotation are 12.390 10.164 9.231 7.380 9.967 9.289 7.526 7.707 73.654 respectively.

Table 7. Table of factor load coefficients after rotation

Name	factor load coefficient								Common degree (common factor variance)
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8	
Product Strategy 1	0.153	0.109	-0.001	0.057	0.794	0.220	0.136	0.112	0.749
Product Strategy 2	0.130	0.085	0.196	0.085	0.806	0.146	-0.062	0.161	0.770
Product Strategy 3	0.190	0.151	0.139	0.026	0.792	0.040	0.176	0.011	0.740
Price Strategy 1	0.167	0.160	0.028	-0.009	0.132	0.068	0.080	0.867	0.835
Pricing Strategy 2	0.184	0.101	0.103	0.038	0.103	-0.015	0.089	0.878	0.845
Channel Strategy 1	0.228	-0.029	0.726	-0.031	0.188	0.015	0.135	0.067	0.639
Channel Strategy 2	0.070	0.176	0.771	0.038	0.040	0.204	0.097	0.051	0.686
Channel Strategy 3	0.108	0.087	0.817	0.100	0.081	0.142	-0.078	0.027	0.729
Promotion Strategy 1	0.225	0.022	0.120	0.022	0.059	0.167	0.844	0.072	0.815
Promotion Strategy 2	0.118	0.076	0.011	0.174	0.150	0.079	0.839	0.101	0.793
Customer Needs 1	0.202	0.828	0.075	0.067	0.053	0.127	0.079	0.031	0.763
Customer demand 2	0.094	0.784	0.087	0.103	0.083	0.007	0.092	0.167	0.685
Customer needs 3	0.131	0.851	0.068	-0.019	0.179	0.029	-0.062	0.078	0.789
Ease of purchase 1	0.213	0.067	0.067	0.195	0.197	0.666	0.074	-0.057	0.584
Convenience of purchase 2	0.088	0.050	0.235	0.010	0.050	0.832	-0.008	0.091	0.769
Purchase convenience 3	0.104	0.042	0.070	0.014	0.138	0.778	0.199	0.018	0.683
Customer Communication 1	0.184	0.034	0.057	0.825	0.100	0.137	0.128	-0.052	0.766
Customer Communication 2	0.108	0.095	0.039	0.885	0.033	0.031	0.054	0.076	0.816
Purchase Intention and Behavior 1	0.778	0.107	0.060	0.030	0.108	0.060	0.174	0.161	0.693

Name	factor load coefficient								Common degree (common factor variance)
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8	
Purchase Intention and Behavior 2	0.809	0.166	0.123	0.110	0.115	0.041	0.070	0.071	0.735
Purchase Intention and Behavior 3	0.724	0.142	0.108	0.136	0.152	0.244	0.064	0.110	0.674
Purchase Intention and Behavior 4	0.702	0.102	0.205	0.137	0.162	0.164	0.123	0.113	0.645

The data in this study were rotated using the maximum variance rotation method (varimax) in order to find the correspondence between the factors and the study items. The above table shows the information extraction of factors for research items and the corresponding relationship between factors and research items. From the above table, it can be seen that the common value corresponding to all research items is higher than 0.4, and the absolute value of the corresponding factor load coefficient is greater than 0.5, which means that there is a strong correlation between research items and factors, and factors can effectively extract information. Therefore, the scale has good construct validity.

3.3.3 Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis, as a 1 measure of the strength of statistical relationships between things, aims to measure the strength of the linear correlation between variables. The correlation analysis focuses on the strength and direction of the direct linear correlation between the two variables, and in the correlation analysis, both variables are outcome variables, regardless of primary or secondary.

Generally, the correlation coefficient R is used to describe the linear correlation degree between variables. The positive and negative values of the correlation coefficient R indicate the direction of direct linear correlation between the two variables. $R > 0$ is positive correlation, $R < 0$ is negative correlation, $R = 0$ is zero correlation. The absolute value of R indicates the closeness of linear correlation between the two variables. The closer the absolute value of R is to 1, the higher the closeness; the closer the absolute value of R is to 0, the lower the closeness. The Pearson correlation coefficient, also known as the product-difference correlation coefficient, is a common indicator that quantitatively describes the degree of linear correlation.

Table 8. Pearson related

	Product Strategy	Price Strategy	Channel Strategy	Promotion Strategy	customer demand	Purchase convenience	Customer Communication	Purchase Intention and Behavior
Product Strategy	1							
Price Strategy	0.300 **	1						
Channel Strategy	0.320 **	0.198 **	1					
Promotion Strategy	0.296 **	0.245 **	0.205 **	1				
customer demand	0.314 **	0.297 **	0.242 **	0.167 *	1			
Purchase convenience	0.370 **	0.136 *	0.356 **	0.302 **	0.199 **	1		
Customer Communication	0.206 **	0.097	0.158 *	0.253 **	0.180 **	0.233 **	1	
Purchase Intention and Behavior	0.427 **	0.374 **	0.377 **	0.388 **	0.373 **	0.379 **	0.329 **	1

Correlation analysis using Pearson correlation coefficients reveals significant positive relationships between various marketing and customer experience variables and purchase intention and behavior. Specifically, product strategy correlates with purchase intention and behavior at 0.427, indicating a strong positive link where aligning product strategy with consumer needs and offering high-quality products enhances purchasing willingness and behavior. Similarly, price strategy (0.374) and channel strategy (0.377) show significant positive correlations, suggesting that reasonable pricing and convenient, diverse purchase channels are crucial for boosting consumer purchase intentions and promoting buying behavior. Promotional strategies (0.388) also exhibit a notable impact, with effective promotions such as discounts, gifts, and coupons attracting consumer attention and stimulating purchasing actions. Customer demand (0.373) serves as the foundation for purchase intention and behavior, emphasizing the importance of customer-centric marketing strategies. Purchase convenience (0.379) further confirms the role of ease in the purchase decision-making process, while good customer communication (0.329)

fosters trust, enhances brand loyalty, and promotes purchase behavior through better understanding and tailored offerings. In summary, the strong positive correlations underscore the necessity for businesses to comprehensively consider products, prices, channels, promotions, customer needs, purchase convenience, and customer communication in formulating marketing strategies to comprehensively improve consumers' purchase intentions and behaviors.

4. Conclusion

Founded in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ron Wayne with the Apple I, Apple has revolutionized the consumer electronics market through iconic products like the iPod, iPhone, and iPad, solidifying its global leadership. This success stems from its commitment to innovation, stylish design, and high-quality service. From the Apple II in 1977 to challenges with the Macintosh in 1984, and Jobs' return in 1997 leading to revolutionary products, Apple has continued to innovate under CEO Tim Cook, expanding into new lines like Apple Watch and AirPods. Its product strategy emphasizes innovative design and "hunger marketing," fostering brand loyalty through a high-end image and consistent operating system. Pricing strategies and marketing channels focus on maintaining price stability, enhancing user experience, and expanding market coverage. For the Chinese market, Apple should strengthen technological innovation, expand reach, improve service and compatibility, optimize channel management, and enhance public relations. Apple's success offers valuable insights for domestic enterprises.

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