
ТЕОРИЯ И ПРАКТИКА ЗАРУБЕЖНЫХ СРЕДСТВ МАССОВОЙ ИНФОРМАЦИИ

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF FOREIGN MASS MEDIA

УДК 316.77:001.8; 070:001.8

ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ КОММУНИКАЦИОННЫХ СТРАТЕГИЙ КИТАЙСКИХ ТРАНСНАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ КОМПАНИЙ В АСПЕКТЕ НОВЫХ МЕДИА НА ПРИМЕРЕ БРЕНДА HUAWEI

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Аннотация. В последние годы роль интернет-технологий в создании новых медиакоммуникаций становится все более заметной. Большинство компаний внедряют новые модели медиакоммуникаций для содействия корпоративным маркетинговым коммуникациям с помощью клиентов, имеющих соответствующий ресурс. Компания *Huawei* входит в список «Fortune 500» и выступает типичным примером реализации стратегии международного развития китайских транснациональных компаний. Она не только является достаточно признанной в Китае, но и имеет хорошую репутацию в Европе и Соединенных Штатах. С точки зрения новых медиа рассматривается специфика международной коммуникационной стратегии бренда *Huawei*, основанная на широком применении социальных сетей. Сформулированы рекомендации и предложения по улучшению международного развития других транснациональных компаний.

Ключевые слова: международная коммуникация; стратегия интернационализации; *Huawei*; корпоративный бренд; новые медиа.

Образец цитирования:

Ван Жэньи, Солодовникова Т.В. Исследование международных коммуникационных стратегий китайских транснациональных компаний в аспекте новых медиа на примере бренда *Huawei*. *Журнал Белорусского государственного университета. Журналистика*. 2024;2:55–62 (на англ.). EDN: LMOVEH

For citation:

Wang Zhenyi, Saladounikava TV. Research on the international communication strategies of Chinese multinational companies from the perspective of new media taking *Huawei* as an example. *Journal of the Belarusian State University. Journalism*. 2024;2:55–62. EDN: LMOVEH

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RESEARCH ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES OF CHINESE MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NEW MEDIA TAKING HUAWEI AS AN EXAMPLE

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Abstract. In recent years, the role of Internet technology in corporate new media communication has become increasingly prominent. Most companies have established new media communication models with the support of relevant customers to help corporate marketing communication. *Huawei* is a *Fortune 500* company and a typical representative of the international development strategy of Chinese multinational companies. It is not only widely recognised in China, but also has a high reputation in Europe and the United States. From the perspective of new media, this article focuses on the international communication strategy of *Huawei*'s brand, based on social media. It has been provided reference and improvement suggestions for the international development of other multinational companies.

Keywords: international communication; internationalisation strategy; *Huawei*; corporate brand; new media.

Introduction

Nowadays multinational corporations play a leading role in the current global economics development and system transformation of the global economic system. As N. Kondratiev pointed out, «the leading role played by multinational corporations as the main body of the global economic system has been recognised by the scientific community at home and abroad» [1, p. 94]. The formation of multinational corporations is closely related to the globalisation of the world economy. In fact, it is one of the products of globalisation. At the same time, under the new conditions, multinational corporations have become the main catalyst for the process of globalisation and the transformation of the world and national economies [1]. There are about 2000 corporate structures in the world today, with activities covering more than 500 countries, including 500 companies, producing a total social output value of 21.9 trln US dollars, with a total number of employees of 35.6 mln people. In addition, 93 % of headquarters of these companies are mainly located in developed countries: the United States, the European Union and Japan [2]. Therefore, the direction of global economic development in the near future depends to a large extent on the activities of multinational companies and their strategic policies and models.

Moreover, under the background of Internet and the accelerating development speed of new media it occupies an important position in corporate marketing strategies. On the basis of continuing the previous communication methods such as advertising, companies have begun to rely on new media platforms to promote products and services, and people have entered the era of

enterprises as media. How to give full play to the role of new media in brand communication, product communication and public opinion response is a topic facing enterprises, which is related to the reputation and future development of enterprises.

With the development of digital technology, the subjects of international communication are becoming more and more diversified. International communication is no longer just a communication activity led by the government. Enterprises use new media to play an increasingly important role in international communication. Enterprises use the Internet for international communication, which can not only improve the international reputation of the enterprise itself, but also play a certain role in enhancing the image of the country. *Huawei* is one of the earliest Chinese companies to conduct international communication. It has a wide reputation internationally. In the list of *Fortune Magazine*'s top 500 companies in 2018, *Huawei* once again made the list without suspense, ranking 111th. From imitating to becoming one of the world's three largest telecommunications system suppliers, *Huawei*'s international communication strategy can provide reference and improvement suggestions for the international development of other multinational companies.

This paper uses a combination of literature research and case analysis methods to focus on the international communication strategy of *Huawei*'s brand, aiming to provide reference and improvement suggestions for the international development of other multinational companies.

Main part

Analysis of factors affecting international communication of multinational companies. For any enterprise, going international is one of the develop-

ment opportunities. Selling goods or services in another country can expand the scope of a company's operations. The benefits of entering foreign markets include

increasing sales and profits, achieving market diversification while reducing dependence on any one market, better access to resources and talent, obtaining foreign exchange opportunities, achieving economies of scale and better profit margins as production grows, and gaining brand awareness of international enterprises, all of which are factors that encourage companies to invest resources and seek opportunities to expand the scale of their operations. All of these factors encourage companies to seek resources and find opportunities to expand the scale of their operations. However, there are also certain risks in this business behaviour, mainly related to cultural particularities, local legislation, and specific business regulations in various countries. Economists believe that entering foreign markets has the following disadvantages¹:

- high cost of export duties and customs restrictions;
- limit of the amount of company goods on a foreign market;
- need to comply with specific regulations on taxes, import procedures, currency transactions and distribution agreements;
- changes in technology (production and safety standards for goods or services in foreign markets can be more stringent);
- cultural and language barriers among target groups;
- political and economic instability;
- delivery times and to non-payment or product losses;
- unfavorable exchange rate dynamics.

At the same time, there are several ways to enter foreign markets: from direct sales to joint ventures with local companies. Both ways have their own advantages and disadvantages, and each requires a different positioning strategy. It is important to obtain advice on key legal, regulatory and tax issues that may affect your ability to do business in foreign markets, assess cultural barriers that may limit the company's presence in the local market. It is necessary to conduct marketing research to ensure the capacity of the foreign market and the willingness of local residents to purchase the company's product or services.

It is worth noting that one of the more controversial issues in the management of international communication activities is the choice of advertising policy. It means creating standardised advertising for all countries or developing special advertising messages for specific countries. Some experts believe that advertising should not depend on national characteristics, since it is based on identifying and exploiting general behavioural characteristics of consumers. Other experts believe that advertising should be unique and targeted

to specific consumers in foreign markets. It is modified and adapted to each culture, so supporters of this view believe that this type of advertising will be the most effective. Today, there are several types of international advertising strategies².

An example of the use of a transnational advertising strategy is the campaign of the *Dunkin Donuts* company, which has developed a separate advertising campaign for each country. The menu is designed to meet the different needs of global customers. The brand creates unique products for each country. In South Korea, they offer a yuzu drink, in Lebanon, they offer a mango chocolate donut, in Russia, you can try a dankler (something between a donut and an eclair).

Another example of this advertising strategy is the *Parker* campaign, which sells pens around the world. Each country has its own ad. For example, a German print ad shows a pen in hand and the caption: «This is how to write well». In the United States, one of the communication messages is following: «Someday, all you need is a Parker». From this examples, it can be concluded that two different countries emphasise two different values. If the quality and functionality of a product are important to Germany, then the superiority of a product is paramount to the United States. This method of advertising in international markets has proven to be necessary for different types of consumer value orientations and motivations [3].

In addition, it is worthwhile to delve deeper into the domestic factors that influence the choice of communication strategies for specific foreign markets. The most significant influences are the following:

- advertising legislation and tax details in different countries;
- national or racial culture;
- the way of placing of and the details of advertising production;
- price factors.

Therefore, in the context of globalisation, more and more international companies are opening up overseas markets. International communication is particularly important in this process, and social media has brought new opportunities for brand international communication. *Huawei's* corporate strength, brand value and international communication capabilities are all in a relatively leading position among domestic companies. The study of *Huawei's* international communication strategy based on social media has theoretical significance in supplementing the theory of social media international communication strategy, and practical significance in providing reference for other companies to carry out international communication.

¹Subtleties of European marketing: how to promote product abroad? [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://rb.ru/opinion/chto-predstavlyayet-iz-sebya-evropejskij-marketing> (date of access: 21.12.2023) (in Russ.).

²Marketing strategy of the company for foreign countries [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://gidnenuzen.ru/marketingovaya-strategiya-kompanii-dlya-zarubezhnyh-stran> (date of access: 21.12.2023) (in Russ.).

Analysis of Huawei's media communication path in the new era. As Chinese enterprises gradually become internationalised, their international communication capabilities are generally still relatively weak, and international public opinion and the public's recognition and trust in them are still poor. On 9 May 2023, the first China brand global communication conference was held in Shanghai, and the China brand global communication research report was officially released. According to the report, both Chinese state-owned enterprise brands and private enterprise brands have strong global communication capabilities and they have played an important role in the process of Chinese brands going overseas. In particular, private enterprises have become an important force in the global communication of Chinese brands. The three-dimensional blueprint for the global communication of Chinese brands not only relies on traditional industry giants, but also many emerging technology and consumer brands have joined. In addition, electronic information technology brands, smart device platforms and others have gained more and more attention from consumers with their high-quality products and services.

According to the social media platforms recommended by the social media attachment links provided by the international version of *Huawei's* official website, the study selected the top three platforms in terms of the number of fans and the number of accounts opened, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, and sorted out the number, type, image recognition system characteristics and other information of *Huawei's* accounts opened on these three platforms, and summarised *Huawei's* setting, positioning and construction strategies for the communication subject on social media platforms.

Facebook is currently the world's largest social networking platform, originating from the social networking service and social media website of the United States. According to data from the third party research platform *Statista*, as of June 2024, Facebook is the most popular social media in the world, with 2.9 bln monthly active users³. *Huawei* has 36 accounts on Facebook, and the international version of *Huawei's* official website has been linked to the platform.

Twitter's latest total registered users are about 1.3bln people, and Twitter has more than 330 mln active users per month. Twitter is suitable for mobile terminal applications and is evenly distributed among different groups of people. In addition, Twitter has developed a «brand channel» where major brands can build their pages and create groups. *Huawei* has opened 33 brand channels on the Twitter platform, and the international version of its official website has been linked to the platform.

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional social networking site and a social network for business cus-

tomers. LinkedIn now has 930 mln registered users and can build a network of contacts for professionals. Currently, the platform provides more than 10 mln job opportunities and has established network homepages for about 9 mln companies [4]. *Huawei* has 39 network homepages on LinkedIn, and the international version of its official website has been linked to the platform.

The communication subject expresses its own will and conveys its own emotions and tendencies through communication behaviour. Different communication subjects also have certain differences in their voice tendencies. Within an organisation, different interest groups will be formed due to differences in value orientation, which provides a basis for the diversification of communication subjects. As a world-class multinational company, *Huawei* has different business segments and will also set up different regional branches around the world based on regional differences. These different business segments and regional branches distributed around the world will have different interest appeals due to differences in business subjects and business content. In order to more conveniently spread the information of their respective business subjects and provide more accurate and effective communication services for their respective businesses, they will open different account subjects on social media. These criss-crossing account subjects have shaped *Huawei's* three-dimensional communication subject pattern on social media.

By combing through *Huawei's* accounts on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, the study found that *Huawei's* officially certified accounts present the vertical characteristics of official accounts of *Huawei* headquarters, official accounts of business units or regional companies, official accounts of product lines in various countries and regions, and the horizontal characteristics of official accounts of business units, official accounts of regional branches and official accounts of product lines in various countries and regions. A three-dimensional diagram of *Huawei's* social media account settings was constructed (fig. 1).

Vertically set communication subjects. A comprehensive analysis of the accounts on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn shows that *Huawei's* account subjects on social media platforms are generally divided into three levels. Taking the vertical setting of business segments as an example, the first level is the official account *@HuaweiTechnologies* of *Huawei's* headquarters; the second level is *@HuaweiCarrierBusiness*, *@HuaweiTechnologiesEnterprise*, *@HuaweiConsumerBusinessGroup* and *@Huawei_Cloud* set up at the business segment level according to *Huawei's* four major business systems, this level is the official account *@HuaweiLatinoamerica* set up at the regional company level for *Huawei's* Latin American region; the third level is the official

³Most famous social network sites 2019 [Electronic resource]. URL: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/> (date of access: 13.06.2023).

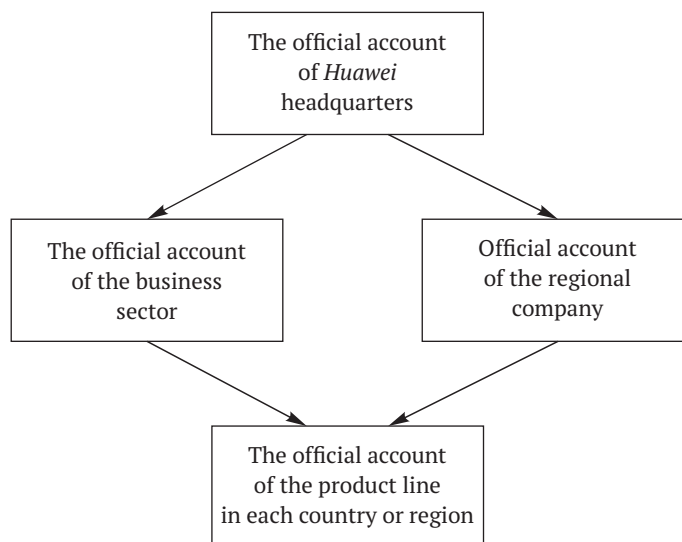


Fig. 1. Schematic diagram of Huawei's social media account three-dimensional settings

account set up in various countries for products with a large number of consumer businesses, such as the official account @HuaweiMobileMexico set up for Huawei's mobile smart terminal products in Mexico. Relying on the official account of Huawei's headquarters, the official accounts of Huawei's four major business segments and the official accounts set up in specific countries for specific products, Huawei's communication subjects on overseas social media constitute a vertical structure.

By counting Huawei's account entities on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, and classifying them according to the categories in table, it is found that the number of official accounts opened by Huawei on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn is not much different, but the number of different account types is quite different.

The number of account entities set up by Huawei on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn is three and six respectively, which is not obvious. However, Huawei has only set up seven official account entities for business sectors on the LinkedIn platform, which is twelve less than the official account entities set up by products in countries and regions. Huawei products have the largest number of official accounts set up in countries or regions, accounting for 42.60 %. The number of official accounts in business sectors is the least, only 25.00 %. Among them, Huawei smartphones have the largest number of official accounts set up in various countries and regions, which is inseparable from the unique social advantages of social media. Huawei can use social media to influence users' consumption psychology at the emotional level.

Number of Huawei's social media accounts (2024)

Account type	Twitter	Facebook	LinkedIn	Total
Regional company official account	11	11	13	35
Business segment official account	8	12	7	27
Product official account in country or region	14	13	19	46
<i>Total</i>	33	36	39	108

Horizontally set communication subjects. Huawei's horizontal communication subjects on overseas social media are mainly accounts set up by independent business or regional entities. There is basically no vertical hierarchical relationship between the horizontally set communication subjects, and they are in a state of mutual independence. Huawei's four major business sectors constitute a horizontal communication sub-

ject model, and the official accounts of each regional company also constitute a horizontal communication subject model. On this basis, the account subjects set up based on the business sectors and regional companies also form independent communication subjects, which are independent of each other. This constitutes the horizontal model of Huawei's communication subjects on overseas social media, as shown in fig. 2.

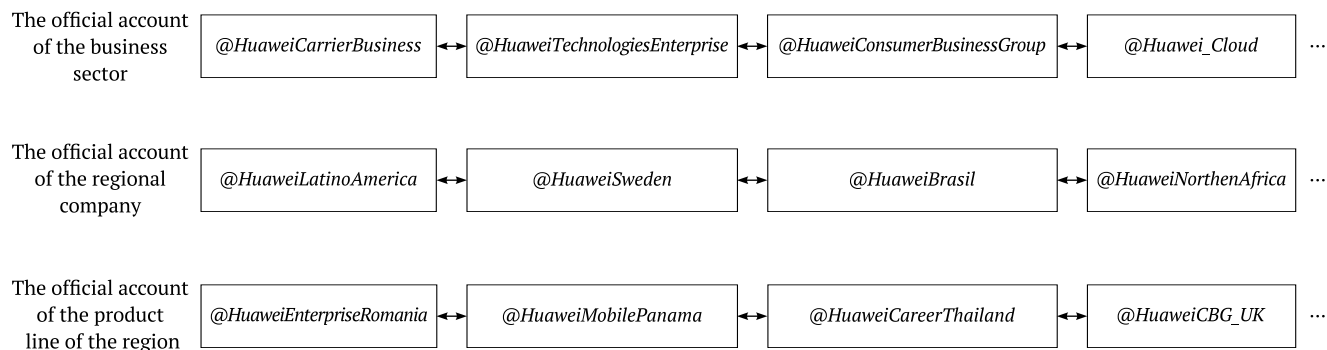


Fig. 2. Schematic diagram of *Huawei's* social media account horizontal setting

In the business sector, the four major business sectors of carrier business, technologies group, enterprise, consumer business and *Huawei* cloud business independently constitute a horizontal communication subject model. In the field of regional company official accounts, the communication subjects are divided according to the business geographical scope constitute another horizontal communication subject model. In the last level, the official accounts set up by various product lines in various countries and regions form another horizontal communication subject model.

Differentiated positioning of communication subjects. *Huawei's* communication subjects are divided into two modes, vertical and horizontal, according to business sectors and radiation areas, which leads to differences in the positioning of communication subjects. This makes the communication subjects need to complement each other in content, so the social media accounts within the *Huawei* system form an information sharing network.

As a *Fortune 500* company, *Huawei* has a large market scale and a wide range of business. At present, the products and services provided by *Huawei* cover network operator business, enterprise business, consumer business and *Huawei* cloud business. According to the main layout of *Huawei's* overseas social media accounts, it can be found that *Huawei* has carried out a three-dimensional social media communication subject layout according to different business contents.

The fundamental purpose of corporate organisations actively publishing corporate information on social media is to facilitate transactions and obtain sales revenue. The positioning of accounts of different business types should also be different, so that they can serve the target consumer groups more accurately and make profits. The different account entities set up by *Huawei* on social media are also based on the differences in its business scope. The study found that there are three levels of account entities of *Huawei* on social media, and the positioning of these three levels is also distinctly different.

The three-level communication account entities set up by *Huawei* on social media are the official account

of *Huawei* headquarters, the official account of regional companies, the official account of business segments, and the official account of products set up in countries and regions. The audience groups faced by these communication entities are also different according to the differences in their business entities.

First, the official account of *Huawei* headquarters mainly conveys official information and has a more serious style. The communication subject mainly faces global audiences who pay attention to the *Huawei* brand, and mainly conveys official information about major events of *Huawei* group. At the same time, due to the nature of the enterprise, the account will also publish the development and application of *Huawei's* related technologies, which is generally serious and authoritative. The official accounts of the four major business segments mainly face audiences who pay attention to specific business content, and their positioning will vary greatly due to different audiences.

Second, the content of the official accounts of enterprise business and operator business tends to be industry information. The users of this type of communication subject are mainly government and commercial organisations. The audiences attracted by the accounts of these two business subjects on social media basically have certain basic knowledge in the field of science and technology, so their communication content will also focus more on the transmission of scientific and technological information.

Third, the communication content of the official account of the consumer business is more from the user's perspective. Generally, it is the sales of *Huawei's* mobile devices, and the fans it attracts are more focused on the smart terminal products launched by *Huawei*. The audience of the consumer business communication subject is scattered individuals, who are more susceptible to emotional infection and group effects. Their communication content is more civilian and the overall image is more friendly.

Fourth, the official account of the regional company focuses more on delivering product information and activity information in the region, and provides information consultation and other services to consumer groups

in the region. The official account set up by the product in the country and region more accurately conveys the product marketing information and services of the product in specific countries and regions.

The differentiated positioning of the communication subject will lead to differences in communication content and style, but as a whole, the communication subjects within the same system should uniformly convey corporate values. This requires that differentiated communication subjects focus on specific topics and deliver content in a targeted manner, so as to jointly create a social media matrix that integrates information release and interactive communication functions [5]. *Huawei's* social media information sharing is based on the differences in the positioning of communication subjects and the content of communication, which is why *Huawei's* overseas social media accounts are necessary to build an information sharing network. Due to the differences in the positioning of the three levels of *Huawei's* overseas social media communication subjects, the content and style of their releases will also be different. The content released by *Huawei's* headquarters official account mainly focuses on major events, company honours, and underlying technical significance to

ensure the authority of the information; the content released by *Huawei's* business unit official account focuses on the promotion and service of specific products; the content released by *Huawei's* regional branch official account is closer to the needs of local consumers, which can enhance the activity of content and maintain intimacy with fans. The three levels of information show obvious hierarchy and differences, which provides a demand basis for the flow of information and information network sharing, and also provides conditions for interaction between communication subjects.

Huawei's social media accounts are arranged along two main lines, vertically and horizontally, forming a strict information network layout system. These communication subjects represent their own communication tendencies and have different focuses in content production. These different communication contents are intertwined to form an information network through the interactive behaviours between communication subjects. At the same time, through the interaction of information, they also share each other's information to a certain extent, forming a communication synergy and jointly promoting the formation of *Huawei's* good brand image.

Conclusions

This paper studies *Huawei's* international communication strategy based on social media through literature research, content analysis and social media. By combing *Huawei's* accounts on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, it is found that *Huawei's* officially certified accounts present the vertical characteristics of official accounts of *Huawei* headquarters, official accounts of business segments and regional companies, official accounts of product lines in various countries and regions, and the horizontal characteristics of official accounts of business segments, official accounts of regional branches and official accounts of product lines in various countries and regions. This leads to differences in the positioning of communication subjects, which makes the communication subjects need to complement each other in content. Therefore, the social media accounts within the *Huawei* system form an information sharing network. These

communication subjects enable the audience to form an overall impression of the *Huawei* brand through a unified and standardised image recognition system, and strengthen the integrated image of *Huawei's* official accounts with an interconnected communication matrix.

Therefore, in the wave of globalisation, if companies want to become bigger and stronger, they must have an international perspective and start to use the development of new media to carry out international communication and exchange of brands. In this way, the company's brand influence can be improved and the company's soft power in global competition can be improved. *Huawei's* success is not accidental. It has gradually developed in line with the times and constantly innovated and improved its products. This has enabled the company to stand out in the wave of globalisation and maintain a good development momentum.

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Received by editorial board 16.01.2024.