



Research on the Influence of Internet Publicity of Movie on College Students' Movie-Watching Behavior

MAO Chun^{[a],*}

^[a]School of Journalism and Communication, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

This study uses a questionnaire survey to explore the influence of movie publicity in new media era on college students' movie-watching behavior. The study shows that: a) The frequency of contacting movie publicity and movie-watching of college students are both quite high. More than 99% of college students surveyed have at least one contact with movie publicity information every month; all the students surveyed watch at least one movie every month. b) College students' recognition of public reviews on the Internet is relatively low and they are skeptical to the authenticity of most of these reviews. c) Reviews from acquaintances have a great influence on college students' movie-watching behavior and the recognition is also relatively high. d) Move trailers are the most acceptable movie publicity ways for college students, but the forms and characteristics of movie trailers need to be enhanced.

Key words: College students; Movie publicity; Movie-watching behavior

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1. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the past decade, at the size of box office in Chinese film market and the audience continue to grow. In 2013,

the total Chinese box office reached 17 billion Yuan, surpassing Japan to become the world's second largest film market. In 2014, China's annual film box office revenue was 29.639 billion Yuan with an increase of 36.15% than that of the previous year. In February 2015, we created the highest single-month performance of 4.05 billion Yuan, surpassing the box office of the United States in February over the same period and becoming the commanding heights of the global box office (*People.cn.*, 2015, February). The continued prosperity of the Chinese film market has given birth to the intensified competition. How to cultivate movie-watching interest in early marketing is becoming more important. Studies have shown that (Zhang, 2014), college students are important consumer groups of the film industry. They are not only present consumers, but with their incomes and employment increasing, they are potential core consumer groups. Today, the Internet and mobile Internet are growing at an alarming rate and squeezing traditional paper media and television media, becoming the main positions of information dissemination as well as the "battleground" in the pre-publicity for movies.

On consumer behavior and satisfaction of different groups in the background of the Internet, sociology, management, psychology and other disciplines have conducted numerous and thorough research. In the film industry, there are many scholars to explore research on movie-watching behavior.

Michael H. Burzynski and etc (1977), through experiments conduct research on the influence of positive and negative priori information on the movie satisfaction. The results show that priori information has a significant influence on film appreciation. The study of Riadh Ladhari (Ladhari, 2007) also shows the two emotions of pleasure and awakening have a significant and positive impact on satisfaction, and the satisfaction of the audience will have a positive impact on the spread of the reputation. Sangkil Moon and etc. through the study of the factors of audience satisfaction, find that, the audience's movie-

watching experience and the collective evaluation from film communities towards movies by the same director or actors in the past will have an impact on satisfaction (Moon, Bergey, & Iacobucci, 2010).

Zhang Hongzhong and etc. through telephone sample survey research on residents of Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Guangzhou find that film satisfaction is not related to the promotion before the film is released and the audience discussion after the film is released. Only when one conducts recommendation behavior to others, it indicates their satisfaction; highly educated consumer population demands higher satisfaction (Zhang, Zhou, & Li, 2013). Zhang Yang investigates university students in terms of their "use and satisfaction" status of watching movie trailers and finds that college students' use the frequency with movie trailers has a positive impact on their theater movie-watching frequency. He advocates we should increase efforts to put movie trailers on the Internet (Zhang, 2014).

This paper aims to use questionnaires to analyze college students' acceptance of online movie marketing information and explore the impact of film promotion information in new media era on college students' movie-watching behavior so as to learn more about the movie-watching status and behavior of college students and also to provide references for Internet movie marketing. In this paper, we have defined movie publicity information as movie trailers, media reports, new film release conference, online reviews, movie posters, the official We Media news and all other information related to the movie promotion.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

For this study, we designed a survey questionnaire titled "the influence of movie publicity information on the movie-watching behavior of college students". The survey questionnaire is in the form of a closed structure. It needs about 8-10 minutes to complete a questionnaire. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed and students surveyed were from Southwest University, Chongqing University of Arts and Sciences, Chongqing Youth Vocational and Technical College. The form to fill in a questionnaire is a combination of on-site filling in and e-mail filling in. The distribution and collection of questionnaires took a total of three weeks. We recovered a total of 263 copies of the questionnaire with a recovery rate of 87.7%. Excluding questionnaires which were not completed and invalid, valid questionnaires analyzed in this study is 258 copies in total.

3. THE STATISTICS AND ANALYSIS

3.1 Basic Situation of College Students' Contact with Movies and Movie Publicity Information

According to the basic statistics on the student number and frequency, we got to know the basic situation of

college students' contact with films, including: contact with film publicity information and movie watching frequency, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

Table 1
College Students' Contact With Movie Publicity Information

Frequency	Student number	Percentage
More than once a week	22	8.53%
Once a week	81	31.40%
Twice a week	106	41.09%
Once a month	47	18.22%
Less than once a month	2	0.78%
Total	258	100.00%

Table 2
College Students' Movie-Watching Frequency

Frequency	Student number	Percentage
More than once a week	36	13.95%
Once a week	124	48.06%
Twice a week	67	25.97%
Once a month	31	12.02%
Less than once a month	0	0.00%
Total	258	100.00%

Through the analysis of the above data, we can find that college students' contact frequency with movie publicity information and movie-watching frequency are quite high. More than 99% of the surveyed students have at least one exposure to film publicity information. All the students surveyed at least see a movie a month. More than 60% (62%) students watch movies at least once a week, and 13.95% of the students even watch movies more than once a week.

Of course, such a high frequency of movie-watching behavior is inextricably linked with the development of the Internet. Domestic movie-watching platforms such as Thunder, Baofeng Player, Youku and Tudou and other movie watching platforms have provided a lot of free movies and free exchange space for college students. In our survey, 86% of students mainly use computers, mobile phones and other terminals to watch movies.

3.2 Influence of Online Movie Reviews on the Movie-Watching Behavior of College Students

Movie watching is in a consumption pattern in which you first pay and then consume, so for consumers, films are merchandises of certain risk, which also put the "movie reviews" to the position of "guiding others in the future movie watching".

3.2.1 The Main Approaches for College Students to Know Newly Released Movies

Through Table 3, we can see that, 60.46% of college students get to know newly released movies from the Internet or interpersonal communication in reality, which

fully interprets the importance of “word of mouth” for the audience to choose a movie. 64.73% of the college students believe that the Internet is the main media channel for them to know newly released movies. In all approaches, the network of acquaintances based on social media has become the first approach for college students to know newly released films, which is also consistent with the fact that almost 100% of college students use social media.

Table 3
Main Approaches to Know Newly Released Movies

Approached	Student number	Percentage
Traditional Media (Newspapers, Television and Posters)	21	8.14%
News or Advertisements from the Internet	81	31.40%
Recommendations from Friends on Social Media (WeChat and QQ and etc.)	86	33.33%
Interpersonal Communication in Reality	70	27.13%
Total	258	100.00%

3.2.2 College Students’ Attitude Towards Public Movie Reviews on the Internet

The anonymity, interactivity and freedom of Internet have provided a platform for the majority of the audience to exchange experience and share movie-watching experience. However, in our study, we find that college students’ acceptance of public review information online is relatively low and they are mostly skeptical of the authenticity of these reviews, as shown in Table 4 and Table 5 below.

Table 4
Influence of Public Reviews on the Movie-Watching Behavior of College Students

Degree of influence	Student number	Percentage
Never	50	19.38%
Sometimes	121	46.90%
Often	62	24.03%
Always	25	9.69%
Total	258	100.00%

Table 5
College Students’ Attitude towards the Authenticity of Public Reviews Online

Authentic or nor	Student number	Percentage
No	43	16.67%
Mostly No	101	39.15%
Mostly Yes	86	33.33%
Yes	28	10.85%
Total	258	100.00%

In the question of “whether public reviews spread online will have a decisive impact on if you are going to watch a movie or not”, only 9.69% of the students chose “Yes”. 66.28% of the students believe that public reviews online basically have no impact on whether or not they are going to watch a movie. In the question of “how do you think of the authenticity of public reviews circulated on the Internet”, more than half of the students (55.83%) think that most public reviews online are untrue. This result should have an important relationship with water army on the Internet. Water armies on the Internet have posted much low-quality false information and have lost the trust of the public. Nevertheless, we must recognize that there are still one-third of college students have a positive attitude towards public reviews on the Internet. Film producers cannot give up public reviews and should provide more high quality reviews with real content.

3.2.3 College Students’ Attitude Towards Reviews of Acquaintances

In the above Table 3, we see that 60.46% of college students’ understanding of newly released movies comes from the Internet or interpersonal communication in reality, and “acquaintances” or “friends” have become an important source of information for us to make decisions and get references. In Tables 6 and 7, we see that reviews from acquaintances have a positive impact on college students’ movie-watching behavior. 68.6% of college students think reviews from acquaintances “will have a decisive influence on whether to watch a movie or not” and over 80% of college students believe most reviews from acquaintances are authentic.

Table 6
Influence of Reviews From Acquaintances on the Movie-Watching Behavior of College Students

Degree of influence	Student number	Percentage
Never	22	8.53%
Sometimes	59	22.87%
Often	116	44.96%
Always	61	23.64%
Total	258	100.00%

Table 7
College Students’ Attitude Towards the Authenticity of Reviews From Acquaintances

Authentic or not	Student number	Percentage
No	5	1.94%
Mostly No	36	13.95%
Mostly Yes	139	53.88%
Yes	78	30.23%
Total	258	100.00%

With the extensive application of “WeChat” and other acquaintance social media, interpersonal transmission in reality has been greatly expanded. When we share our

own movie-watching experience, we are also attracted by the experience a friend shared. It is essential that this experience to share, regardless of the evaluation of the film is good or bad, is true and there is no conflicting interests.

3.3 In the Times of “Seeing is Believing”

However, the doubt of the authenticity of online reviews and producers' publicity information does not mean the audience's exclusion of all marketing tools. Through Table 8, we can see that, although in the factors prompting college students to watch a movie, the “Users Rating” only accounted for 30%, “video advertising / trailer” has accounted for 50%. Therefore, in the new media era, young audiences are more willing to “believe what they see”.

Table 8
Which Online Publicity Means will Promote You to Watch the Movie at the Cinema?

Publicity means	Student number	Percentage
Video Advertising/Trailer	129	50%
Users Rating	72	27.91%
Posters	57	22.09%
Total	258	100.00%

Table 9
What do You Think of Movie Ads Pushed Online?

Attitude	Student number	Percentage
Carefully Watch in Full	72	27.91%
Depending on the Content	158	61.24%
Decisively Turn Them Off	28	10.85%
Total	258	100.00%

As shows in Table 9, only about 10% of people will choose to directly close the push of movie trailers, while the remaining 90% of the people do not dislike these “wonderful” movie trailers; of course, the premise is that they are really wonderful enough. Therefore, in many cases, a movie trailer's “treatment” is really much better than other ordinary advertisings. As long as they are interested in the movie, 70% of students will take the initiative to search for a movie trailer (Table 10).

Table 10
Will You Take the Initiative to Search for a New Movie Trailer?

Attitude	Student number	Percentage
Often	73	28.29%
Sometimes	113	43.80%
Never	72	27.91%
Total	258	100.00%

From Table 11, it is not hard for us to find that, college students have already passed the era when they blindly chased the “gorgeous special effects and big scenes” and have gradually formed a distinct “movie-watching personality”. Therefore, in the film's trailers, we should

not blindly “show off the special effects” to highlight effects and scenes, but to fit more diverse tastes of the audience to strengthen the presentation of the stars and the story.

Table 11
What Elements in Movie Publicity is Most Attractive to You?

Elements	Student number	Percentage
Special Effects/Scenes	58	22.48%
Content/Genre	71	27.52%
Stars	73	28.29%
Theme Song/Music	56	21.71%
Total	258	100.00%

CONCLUSION

In the era with diversified entertainment consumption, the film is still the main form of cultural and recreational life of contemporary college students. Our study shows that online publicity information has a major impact on the movie-watching behavior of college students. On the one hand, friends' movie-watching experience and reputation are important factors and the mode of transmission based on “acquaintances” has been formed, waiting for the digging and expanding by filmmakers. On the other hand, the movie trailer is an important driving force to attract college student audience to enter the cinema. Film producers need not only to strengthen the production and promotion of fine trailers, but also go beyond the simple mode of special effects and scenes, based on the feature of the film to produce multiple versions of trailers to meet the different demands.

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