

# RESEARCH ON INFLUENCING FACTORS OF BRAND REPUTATION OF INTERNET KNOWLEDGE PAYMENT\*

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## Abstract

In the 21st century, in the business world, brand strategy is the only way of enterprise development; With the development of the Internet and people's continuous thirst for knowledge, the knowledge paying industry has emerged in China's Internet. In the field of knowledge payment with increasing competition, the effect of "famous brand" is undoubtedly huge; It not only increases product value, but also increases consumer engagement. On this basis, the relationship between Brand love and word of mouth (WOM) is discussed. The results show that Internet brands have distinct brand personalities. When consumers keep their own personalities consistent with their brand personalities, they can generate good brand love, and then promote the formation of electronic word of mouth (eWOM). In addition, consumers sharing their brand experience can effectively enhance the formation and spread of e-word of mouth.

**Keywords:** brand personality; Brand beloved; Electronic word-of-mouth; Consumer personality; Pay for knowledge;

## Introduction

With the continuous improvement of Chinese people's income, consumer demand is also changing, especially the arrival of Mobile Internet and the popularization of Mobile Payment has become the norm, and the demand for content Payment has been increasing since 2016, thus derived another demand -- knowledge Payment. The Knowledge of payment.

Knowledge payment is a business model in which "knowledge" is productized or served for market transactions. To be precise, "knowledge payment refers to the process in which people obtain knowledge and services supported by Internet platforms through new media channels in addition to traditional books and education, and use new payment methods to monetize knowledge" (Wang Xinshu, Guo Jun and Zhou Hongchun, 2018).

In view of the existing Internet knowledge payment products in the Chinese market, this paper summarizes and divides them into four categories: first, PGC (Professional Generated Content) is a knowledge column subscription platform, which is presented in the form of audio and reading, and its main representative is "getting APP"; The second

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category is the audio subscription platform that provides audio courses or knowledge programs, and the typical product is Himalaya FM. The third category is video subscription platforms, which disseminate paid knowledge by making videos. Most of these platforms are knowledge subscription platforms of online education, such as "NetEase Best Courses" and "Baby Tree". The fourth category is the knowledge answering platform, which uses the form of knowledge answering to realize knowledge products. The representative products are the one-to-one voice answering platform "Fenda" and the one-to-many real-time answering platform "Zhihu Live".

### The Objective of the Study

The study investigates the industry leader "Get App". "Get App" was launched in December 2015. It is the main smartphone application software of "knowledge service" under "Luji". It mainly provides users with knowledge services through four modules: paid subscription columns, e-books, dry goods listening books and bookstore and mall.

According to the official data, as of March 2018, the total number of users of GetAPP has exceeded 17 million, and the cumulative sales of paid subscription columns are close to 2.45 million (IREsearch Series, 2018). But now, according to the data released by the CEO of "Luji Thinking" in the regular meeting of "Get" on September 18, 2018, the total number of users of "Get" was 23.22 million as of September 11, 2018.

"Get" is a "knowledge payment platform" integrating three fields of media, content publishing and education (Song Meijie, 2017), and the platform is divided into six schools of science, Humanities, Vision, Social sciences, ability and Business school, with a total of 359 subscribed courses according to the course attributes. It is precisely by relying on its own high-quality content to achieve high user stickiness, and even generate a very high conversion rate to other users, which makes it one of the four famous brands in the knowledge payment industry. This article is based on this this article just selected such an Internet enterprise for brand research, the enterprise profile is as follows:

**Table 1** "Get" products and price classification table

The price The module	The price		
Dry listening	48 yuan a month	35 yuan/consecutive monthly subscription	365 yuan/year
Subscribe to the column	19.9 yuan / 8 to 13	RMB 99/50	RMB 299-365 / year
Electronic bookstore	48 yuan a month	21 yuan/consecutive monthly subscription	199 yuan/year
Get the book	39-19980 yuan/copies		

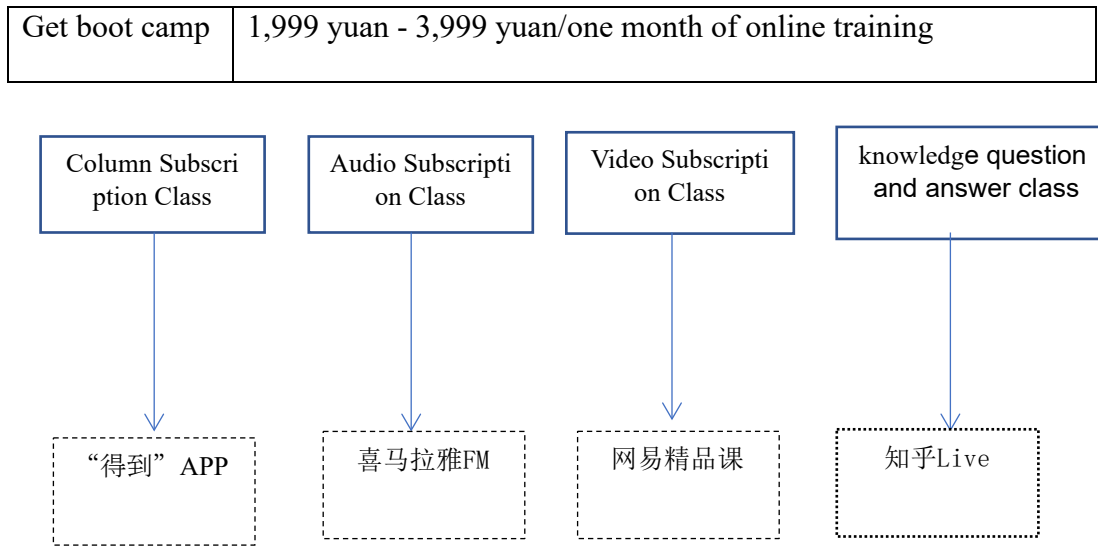


figure1 Product Category Rep for Knowledge Pay Area

## The purpose of this study

The study purposes to explore the influence of brand love on brand reputation from the perspective of brand personality. Because brand personality depends on the classification of consumer personality, and the influence of consumer personality is indispensable for the generation of brand love emotion. Therefore, the role of consumers with different personalities in the relationship between brands and brand love is one of the topics of this study. And because the background of this topic is the Internet knowledge payment field, which involves the sharing and dissemination of knowledge content, so what role the sharing behavior of brand experience has on the brand love and brand word-of-mouth communication is also discussed in this paper.

## Literature review

The term Brand first appeared before 1870. At that time, people had a shallow understanding of Brand, and the concept of Brand mainly appeared in the advertising industry (Li Jing, Wang Qirong and Chen Zhaohui, 2012). Moreover, at present, the research on brand is mainly focused on traditional product brands, and few people take Internet brands as the target to study the role of brand elements.

In the past, Aaker(1997) proposed five dimensions of brand personality in the American consumer environment: "sincerity, stimulation, competence, education and rudeness". However, Bao Qiting (2007), Liu Yong (2008) and Chen Ke, Wang Yuan and Jiang Minghua (2008) took Chinese household appliance brands as the research objects, cigarette brands as the research objects, and digital cameras as the research objects, and divided the brand personality into four or eight dimensions different from those of the Western world and with Chinese cultural characteristics proposed by Aaker (1997). In this way, brand personality has different application scenarios. But even so, they are beyond

traditional goods. In addition, Hathairat and Anon (2016) used silk brands as research objects to verify that the positive impact of brand favorites on positive brand WOM does not extend beyond traditional products.

Based on this, this paper tries to find out the relationship between brand personality, brand love and e-word of mouth on Internet brands. In addition, this paper believes that consumers like the Internet knowledge paid brands because they can meet the internal needs of consumers such as knowledge seeking, pursuit of progress, accumulation of social conversation, that is, the personality characteristics of consumers will interfere with the formation of love for the selected brand. In addition, the background of this topic is in the field of knowledge payment on the Internet, which involves the sharing and dissemination of knowledge content, so the role of sharing brand experience on the relationship between brand love and e-word of mouth is also discussed in this paper. First, we analyze the connotation of brand elements involved in the study.

### **A. Brand personality**

The term brand personality was first proposed by scholars Gardner and Levy in 1959. They believed that brand personality includes all aspects of consumer personality, such as consumer's gender, age and economic and social class status. These personality characteristics are directly inferred from the image characteristics of brand users or indirectly from the image of other products. However, only Aaker (1997) put forward a clear and measurable definition of brand personality. He pointed out that "brand personality is the combination of personality traits related to the brand" and proposed five measurement dimensions that are still in use today, as shown in Table 2. And then Zhao Yanhui (2004) argues that the brand personality is the brand has a human qualities, is "brand" personality traits, in different types of marketing activities, brand expresses the consistent with people's temperament, and this is precisely and consumers to build links, the premise of develops well and it is the enterprise management and marketing and starting point (Cai Qingyi, 2006).

After four years of development, the platform "Get APP" is no longer obscure in the field of knowledge payment in China. It is a famous brand in the industry. The knowledge products produced through the platform are all high-quality products, and it has strong competitiveness in the market -- famous teacher resources, first advantage and excellent production; In the hands of consumers, the knowledge output by its knowledge products is top in terms of ease of learning and usefulness, not to mention the diversity of knowledge categories and high density of knowledge; These are the cornerstone of its brand to the success of the road; This is the brand charm that it exudes, as well as its unique personality.

The users attracted by "Get" are a group of "lifelong learners" who are eager for knowledge, achievement and fashion. The users of the platform themselves carry fine characteristics similar to those of the brand. Therefore, this paper summarizes and expands the definition of brand personality as follows: the unique competitive connotation of a brand, which can arouse the emotional resonance of consumers, and the characteristics that can be described by personified words are brand personality.

**Table 2** Division of brand personality into five dimensions

There are five dimensions of brand personality	Dimension Descriptors
sincere	Be practical, honest, authentic, native, healthy, friendly, emotional, and family-oriented
stimulus	Bold, hip, young, cool, contemporary, one-of-a-kind, imaginative, thrilling
competent	Reliable, intelligent, hardworking, safe, intelligent, united, technical, trustworthy
breeding	Successful, confident, charming, charming, cultured, fluid, feminine, upper-class
rugged	Outdoorsy, sturdy, tough, firm, and masculine

Source: Aaker (1997)

**B. Consumer personality**

Chinese scholar An Yingmin (1995) studied and concluded that "personality" is the most essential psychological characteristic of consumers, which affects consumers' demand motivation and decision-making. In psychology, Consumer Personality is defined as "the sum of the mental outlook and psychological quality of consumers" (Li Zhizhen, 2017), which is the sum of the stable emotions and stable psychological characteristics of consumers in the process of consumption. The psychological characteristics of consumer personality are reflected in the personality, ability, temperament and other aspects of consumers. Bai Chunjing (2008) defined personality traits as the development of individual unique psychological models through the influence of environment and learning.

Accordingly, Liao Shuxian, Zhong Yujun and Qiu Yating (2011) defined consumer personality as the psychological characteristics of consumers that affect their purchasing decisions due to acquired factors such as family education, growth background and learning environment when purchasing goods. If brand if only to keep up with the spending habits of contemporary must attach much importance to the overall shopping experience (Danziger, 2006), and consumers on behalf of their personality psychological characteristics, is for the consumer decision-making, repeat purchase, and sharing of communication based on the basis of product brand only fit consumer psychological attributes, to gain their favor and even keep them.

To sum up, according to the table of this study, the definition of consumer personality can be: "the sum of characteristics that consumers show in real consumption scenes that are consistent with their mental outlook and psychological characteristics". The research also uses the famous Big Five Model to measure the personality of consumers, as shown in Table 3:

**Table 3** Main components and characteristics of the Big Five Model of personality

The main characteristics	Part of the
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neurotic	Anxiety, anger, depression, ego, impulsivity, vulnerability to injury
extraversion	Enthusiastic, social, assertive, active, demand stimulating, positive
open	Fantasizing, artistic, sensitive, practical, thinking, worthy
Yue sex	Trustworthy, forthright, altruistic, submissive, modest, vulnerable
prudential	Ability, order, loyalty and diligence, pursuit of achievement, self-discipline

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Source: Zhang Junni, Jiang Minghua and Pang Jun (2005)

### C. Brand Beloved

Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) formally put forward the term Brand love for the first time, and defined and quantified its connotation. They defined brand love as "the strong emotional attachment of satisfied consumers to a particular brand", and its connotation includes passion, attachment, positive emotion, positive evaluation and love for the brand. According to these principles, brand love is a kind of positive emotion of consumers towards the brand, which has nothing to do with the negative evaluation of the brand. Based on Sternberg's triplet theory of love, scholars Keh, Pang and Peng (2007) defined brand love as "a bidirectional, dynamic, complex and purposeful relationship between consumers and brands, which is intimate, passionate and committed".

Ortiz and Harrison (2011) believe that brand love is the close emotional connection between consumers and the brand. This definition is simple but cannot show consumers' strong feelings towards the brand. Batra, Ahuvia and Bagozzi (2012) pointed out that brand love is a high-order state of consumers' relationship with brands. At the same time, by comparing the connotation of Brand love, Brand attachment and self-brand connection, it is believed that Brand love is the cognition, emotion and behavior of consumers in thought. Although Chinese scholars have also studied the connotation of brand love, for example, Zhu Zhenzhong, Li Xiaodan and Cheng Junmo (2014) believe that brand love is the positive emotion of consumers full of trust, passion and attachment to the brand, but it is still to extend the definition of foreign scholars.

To sum up, this study adopts the definition of brand love as "the close emotional connection between consumers and the brand" as defined by Ortiz et al. (2011). For the object of the study, "Gei" App is already a "Gei" or "Lujsi" brand (Lujsi Technology Co., LTD.) in the Knowledge payment industry, and their operation mode is to constantly absorb and transform users to pay for Knowledge of products on the platform. Therefore, if consumers have a brand love for the brand, it will inevitably spread its brand reputation, which promotes more and more consumers to join the brand to learn and consume.

### D. E-word-of-mouth

With the emergence of the Internet, Buttle (1998) proposed that word of mouth is also needed in the electronic age. Virtual word of mouth is applied in business competition

through electronic bulletin boards and other forms, and forms a traceable information, and nicknamed word of mouth as "free advertising". However, social media extends the traditional theory of WOM. He believes that consumers are role-players in the network society, and WOM communication in social media is not only influenced by the personality factors of consumers, but also by public participation in social media (Kozinets, Valck & Wojnicki, 2010).

Henning-thurau, Walsh and Gremler (2004) believe that e-word of mouth means that consumers share their opinions and experiences on products and services with other consumers through online media platforms. Based on Internet technology, e-word of mouth is all the informal communication channels of consumers' information related to a specific service or commodity. It transcends the geographical restrictions and makes it easier for people to communicate after shopping. Moreover, e-word-of-mouth communication has the characteristics of large scale, anonymous and instantaneous communication (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008).

In the Internet of China, text, audio, video, pictures and other contents are released to the network social media platform to realize online communication and communication, which is e-word of mouth (Bi Jidong and Hu Zhengming, 2010). The information such as user experience or product evaluation shared and disseminated by consumers in different forms on the network platform is the so-called e-word of mouth (Cheng Xiufang, 2011), which is the embodiment of self-value for Internet enterprises, and brings continuous users to the enterprises through a kind of virtual information circulating on the network. Milaković, Mihić and Ivasečko (2017) verified that consumer innovation, belonging-needs and information source credibility all have positive effects on traditional and e-word of mouth communication. Torres, Moro and Irurita (2018) found that information quality, information credibility, information needs and information attitude all have an impact on the usefulness of e-word of mouth, and then on the acceptance of e-word of mouth.

In summary, the characteristics of e-wOM are summarized as follows : 1) Compared with traditional WOM, e-WOM can be retained in the network in the form of words, pictures, etc., and can be retrieved at any time; 2) E-word-of-mouth spreads more widely on the Internet and breaks through the limitation of the circle of friends, which can emerge information contributors and users (Cheung, Luo, Sia & Chen, 2009); 3) E-word-of-mouth breaks the limits of time and space and can be read by users with different rhythms (Novak & Hoffman, 1997); 4) Some savvy Internet users can send messages to authoritative platforms to influence the thoughts of other users (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008). Therefore, based on the characteristics of WOM and the Internet, e-WOM is defined as that consumers share their experience and views on a certain product or service with other consumers through various online channels.

### **E. Brand experience sharing**

Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) proposed that brand experience is the subjective and internal behavioral response of consumers triggered by brand-related

stimuli, including brand design, brand identity, packaging, communication and environment. However, Wu Shuilong (2009) regarded brand experience as impressions and experiences brought by consumers' contact with the brand. Zhang Zhenxing and Bian Yajing (2010) observed brand experience from the perspective of enterprises and believed that the reactions of customers in perception, attitude, emotion and cognition stimulated by brand-related stimuli were brand experience. All of the above are partial adjustments and extensions of the concept of brand experience proposed by Brakus et al. (2009).

Hardin and Higgins (1996) proposed the Shared Reality theory. "Sharing" means that "the two sides achieve unity in their inner states through interaction, so as to hold common ideas and cognition about certain aspects of society". The same can be said for brands, where one's own understanding of the brand's message is exchanged with others in order to achieve a kind of identity. Experience sharing, on the other hand, means that consumers tell others about their consumption experience of a product or brand (Yang Defeng, Zhao Ping and Zhang Mengyuan, 2014).

In summary, according to the definition of brand experience and experience sharing, the research summarizes the meaning of brand experience sharing, that is, the behavior or willingness to share the reactions and feelings triggered by the stimulation of products or services paid for by Internet knowledge.

## Conclusion

### Research on brand personality and brand love

Consumers are willing to invest in the development of similar brands and their relationship (Keller, 1998). In the fierce market competition, brand personality is the soul of a brand (Bhargava, 2008) and the unique competitiveness of a brand. The building of brand personality not only arouses the emotion of consumers (Keller, 1993), but also helps consumers to distinguish products from brands and make differentiated choices (Farquhar, 1990). The research results of Li Pan and Song Yonggao (2012) also show that brand personality can have a direct impact on brand relationship.

The research of Zhang Junni, Jiang Minghua and Pang Jun (2005) showed that consumers' brand personality cognition was in high consistency with consumers' personality cognition. Albert and Merunka (2013) also found that brand personality has a significant positive impact on brand loved ones. Hsieh Meng-ger (2017) from Taiwan proved that the dimensions of sincerity, stimulation, education and competency in brand personality can promote the generation of brand love, while the effect of roughness is not significant.

### Brand personality, research on consumer personality related to brand love

For business operators or brand managers, only by understanding the consumer personality of the target customer group, it is easier to establish strong emotional connection with consumers through the brand logo, brand information, brand image and other attributes, which is equivalent to the generation of love (Ball & Tasaki, 1992; Belk, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981).

Lunardo, Gergaud and Livat (2015) found through their research on 3000 American consumers that except Rudeness in brand personality, the other four dimensions and consumer personality all have positive influences. Aaker (2001) once pointed out that there



is a one-to-one correspondence between sincerity, stimulation and competence in brand personality and consumers' comfort, openness and caution.

Hsieh Menger (2017) studied the use of ebook by people in Taiwan's ME era and pointed out that sincerity, stimulation, competence and education of brand personality have great influence on brand love. In particular, he pointed out that consumers' agreeableness strengthened the relationship between competent brands and brand lovers, while consumers' neuroticism strengthened sincere brands. However, because the research object is limited, he did not seek brand love in the hedonic environment of the physical store environment, which could not affect the willingness of positive e-word-of-mouth communication. This is in line with Chitturi, Raghunathan and Mahajan (2008), who confirmed that if a brand brings consumers happiness, it will affect consumers' positive word-of-mouth communication to the brand. And Jones, Reynolds and Arnold (2006) put forward that hedonic behavior is dominated by non-product-related factors, which is contrary to the result of positive word-of-mouth.

#### **Research on brand love and e-word of mouth**

Zhu Hong and Zhang Xinyan (2012) concluded in their research on the outcome variables of brand beloved that: 1) when college students consume brand beloved, brand beloved emotion will positively affect the positive word-of-mouth communication; 2) the brand with the same self-symbol has a positive influence on both brand love and positive word-of-mouth communication. Wallace, Buil and de Chernatony (2014) proved that brand love has a positive impact on positive word-of-mouth communication and brand acceptance. Karjaluoto, Munnukka and Kiuru (2016) showed through their research on online communities that brand beloved has a strong positive impact on consumers' online and offline word-of-mouth marketing of brands.

Hathairat et al. (2016) conducted a questionnaire survey among 400 customers in a silk brand community, and concluded that brand community has direct and indirect effects on word-of-mouth communication through brand love. In Khon Kaen, Thailand, Suthasinee and Anon (2015) also investigated the relationship between AirAsia's brand love and word of mouth with a 400-point questionnaire. The research results show that brand love has a direct and indirect impact on WOM through brand loyalty. The research of Kiuru (2014) also proves that brand beloved has a positive impact on both electronic brand WOM (eWOM) and traditional brand WOM.

#### **Research on EWOM, EOM and sharing of brand experience**

Experience is social (Sheng Feng and Xu Jing, 2013). In sharing experience, others' views are not only informative, but also "contain the health of interpersonal relationships and the confidence degree of a person's judgment about him or her". In addition, Yang Defeng et al. (2014) verified the reinforcing effect of experience-sharing behavior on brand love through double-blind trials.

In addition, the improvement of "Get" brand value lies in the fact that its e-word of mouth is seen and accepted by more and more people. The Network Effects of Internet business means that the more people use it, the more valuable it becomes, which forms a virtuous circle between consumer users and "Get" App. In order to spread the brand attribute of "Get", consumers can only be more convincing and attractive through personal experience and sharing. Moreover, according to shared reality theory, due to the complexity

of the objective world (such as whether a brand is really worth buying), people need to share their initial feelings about things with others in order to form their stable views and cognition on certain things or events (such as brand experience). In this way, people can know others' understanding of the thing, and finally obtain confirmation of fact cognition and social relationship attribution (Echterhoff et al., 2009). If others' emotions and intentions can be changed through sharing behavior, consumers' sense of self-achievement will undoubtedly be improved, which will increase consumers' motivation demand for sharing their brand experience.

### **Research results and deficiencies**

According to the empirical results of the study, although "Get" brand is an Internet brand, it has the brand personality of "stimulation", "competence", "sincerity" and "education" because of its strong star teacher lineup on the platform. The users who consume on this platform are full of curiosity, strong curiosity, high cognition and willing to share. It is obvious that the products and services of "Get" are personalized and highly consistent with the personality of its users, making users establish a strong emotional connection with "Get", so as to generate a strong brand love emotion. When the knowledge of "got" touches consumers at a certain point, consumers will share their feelings and comments on the Internet, which forms the electronic word of mouth for "got" in an invisible way. Similarly, because of the user's trust endorsement and positive word of mouth spread, not only the scale of "get" users is growing, but also for consumers themselves because of the influence of "get" knowledge, whether in the knowledge or life communication has been improved (such as economics, finance, psychology, etc.). These can be said to achieve a win-win situation, but also "Luoji thinking" has always used "user word-of-mouth marketing method" successful results.

There are limitations, of course. Since the study is based on the Internet knowledge payment in China, it may not be effective to learn from the knowledge payment in other countries, such as Amazon Kindle in the United States and Quora, a knowledge community. China's national conditions are different from those of foreign countries. It is the difference in the views and management of "intellectual property" that gives rise to this unique Internet field in China. Out of curiosity for knowledge, trust in Kols, thirst for information people are willing to pay for knowledge. What knowledge payment solves is the efficiency problem of acquiring and practicing the content presented in a certain form for a certain period of time, which brings positive self-expectation to users.

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