# Social Media and Lifestyle: The Lifestyle Integration Path for Brand Communication

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**Abstract.** This paper took the user-generated text contents about lifestyle on the Xiaohongshu platform as the main object of research, and explored the practical path of living brand communication from three aspects: communication theme, communication content and communication situation. The communication theme is based on the perspective of daily life, highlighting the main theme of healthy life and individual attitude towards life; the communication content is divided into four themes: Self-improvement, Consumption and Interaction, Health and Relaxation, and Inner Feelings; the communication scenario emphasises on the user's needs and builds a lifestyle communication scenario through both online and offline channels.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Lifestyle, Brand Communication, Text Mining, Topic Modelling.

## 1    Introduction

Social media has enabled all of us to become content creators. As a source of inspiration for people's creativity, everyday life reflects the quality of their lives at the moment and their inner needs. The pursuit of a better life today does not end at the material level, but rather focuses primarily on spiritual satisfaction. It is only in the last few years that people have started to focus more on their personal lives, especially in the wake of the new epidemic that has spread throughout the world. Social media platforms provide an avenue for individuals to display their lifestyles as a new sharing medium. Besides describing individuals' standard of living, their standard of living and quality of life, lifestyle is also a reflection of their lifestyle patterns and ways of living.

Building a brand image requires effective communication. The purpose of this strategy is to strengthen the psychological connection between the brand and consumers. This is achieved by making them feel that the brand can express their emotions, thus enhancing their sense of brand identity. Consequently, research from the perspective of consumers' lifestyles can assist brands in capturing consumers' daily mental activities and psychological needs, as well as providing new lifestyle components for brand communication.

## 2 Literature review

### 2.1 Social Media

American scholar Antony Mayfield first coined the term "social media" (also known as "social media") in his book "What is Social Media". Social networking sites, blogs, forums, and other emerging online media are referred to as social media. In this context, social media refers to virtual communities and online platforms that provide the functionality of creating, sharing, and communicating. In the web 2.0 era, social media continues to grow and has become the main medium for people to communicate and share information. As Qin Qin points out, social media will have a time-lag when it comes to affecting people's lives and interacting with them as a natural part of their daily routine[5]. As Wang Jiewen points out, the digital age based on new media will result in significant social changes, with people 'conceptualizing' their daily lives and reshaping interpersonal interactions and patterns of self-identification[6]. According to Marshall McLuhan's media theory, "the medium is the message" and "the medium is an extension of the human body". He emphasizes that the real message is that the news stimulates the audience, which in turn impacts the sensory centers of people, resulting in their minds and, ultimately, society as a whole. Therefore, it is impossible to separate the study of audiences in social media platforms from that of everyday life, or to ignore the importance of social media in the study of people in their natural state of daily life.

### 2.2 Lifestyle

Generally, lifestyle encompasses all aspects of people's lives, including working life, political life, consumption of material goods, leisure, spiritual and cultural life, and social and religious life[7]. Lifestyle, when viewed narrowly, is defined as "clothing, food, housing, transport, and pleasure."[7]. The lifestyle mentioned in this article is based on a narrow concept of lifestyle. Western countries have also transformed the definition of lifestyle from 'lifestyle' to 'style of life,' with Marx, Weber, and Van Buren initially referring to "lifestyle" as a sign of class division and then to "lifestyle." It is at this point that the interpretation of a lifestyle begins with the individual; in the words of Michael E. Sobel, "lifestyle is a characteristic of an individual, a group, or even an entire culture."According to Sobel, lifestyle is a characteristic of people, groups, and even cultures that makes sense, a tendency that suggests a more humanistic reading of lifestyle[2]. A number of Western scholars have translated lifestyle into consumption, such as Peter Earl, who wrote Lifestyle Economics: Consumer Behavior in a Turbulent World, using lifestyle as a subject of discussion while using consumption as the object of investigation. In terms of lifestyle, similarly, lifestyle includes consumption, so the way in which people consume reflects their lifestyle to a certain extent, and lifestyle also influences their lifestyle choices. Everyone can be a communicator in the age of social media. Consequently, the communicator's identity has also begun to be classified according to the type of communication content. A new generation of lifestyle bloggers, also known as "life bloggers," has emerged in recent years, and they share their daily lives on social media. However, the information that they share is not simply about the average person's day but also about exciting events outside of most people's daily lives, which enables them to attract greater attention. A new era has dawned in which people are pursuing better lives. Our daily lives are characterized by aesthetics, and the aesthetics of people's lives are improving and becoming more sophisticated every day. Studying

people's lifestyles requires an understanding of their contexts, and studying how they use social media to create, share, and communicate provides a more realistic perspective.

## 2.3 Living integration of brand communication

In the digital age, people are increasingly drawn to visual culture, which according to Nicholas Mirzoeff is "no longer simply a part of everyday life, but rather everyday life itself." Therefore, the Internet has created a virtual life scenario that connects people's daily lives. Brand advertising is viewed as a "landscape" by Wu Xueqin, i.e., it is not only ideology but also a means of controlling ideology and dominating life[8]. This means that the living integration of brand communication follows the doctrine of daily living: firstly, the "landscape" or "image" has the doctrine of satisfying or conjuring up the illusion of people's desires; secondly, the "landscape" or "image" can become a consumer product. Consequently, brand communication as a transmitter and builder of brand messages and brand images cannot be separated from everyday life itself. Instead, it should be viewed from the perspective of people's everyday lives. To achieve an ideological link with users and strengthen their sense of identity and loyalty to the brand, users must integrate the real and desired lifestyle elements of today's consumers. Nevertheless, the incorporation of lifestyle elements into brand communication does not imply vulgarization or entertainment, but rather that it should be based on the artistic aspects of life, tapping into the natural situations and aspirations of people's lives while taking into account the economic and social benefits of the brand. Thus, by integrating lifestyle into brand communication, the brand is able to resonate with people through the presentation of their actual daily lives and induce them to give more imagination to the brand by depicting their aspirations for a better future.

# 3    Study design

## 3.1 Data sources and processing

In this paper, user text data was collected on the Xiaohongshu platform with the keyword lifestyle,  and a total of 649 Xiaohongshu notes were collected, in which the collected fields included user nickname, body content, comment content, number of retweets, likes and comments, etc.

The collected user text data was pre-processed by Python in this paper, including data cleaning, removing useless fields, word separation, etc. Specifically, it includes: (1) removing non-essential fields such as hypertext links, images, emoticons and null values; (2)de-duplication operations with the help of Baidu deactivation word list, Chinese deactivation word list, Chuan University deactivation word list, HIT deactivation word list and based on domain dictionaries; (3) de-duplication processing of the processed text data to enhance the originality of the text data.

## 3.2 Research Methodology

### Keyword extraction

With the help of keyword extraction technology, the relevant text contents collected in Xiaohongshu and Bilibili platforms were analyzed. By using Python's Jieba word-separation

library, the text data was word-separated, and pre-processed by utilizing Baidu's deactivation word list, the Chinese deactivation word list, Chuan University's deactivation word list, and HIT's deactivation word list. In this paper, the TF-IDF algorithm is used to extract keywords from the processed text data. "TF" represents the frequency of occurrence of a word in a document, i.e. word frequency, so the TF value of keyword i is solved by the formula:

$$\mathbf{TF}_i = \frac{\text{Number of occurrences of keyword i}}{\text{Total number of words in the document}} \tag{1}$$

IDF is the Inverse Text Frequency Index, which aims to indicate the category differentiation ability of keyword i. If the fewer documents containing keyword i, the larger the IDF, the stronger the category differentiation ability of keyword i. Its formula is:

$$\mathbf{IDF} = \mathbf{log} \frac{\text{An overview of the corpus documents}}{\text{Number of documents containing keyword i+1}} \tag{2}$$

Therefore, the TF-IDF can determine the topic prediction ability of keyword i. The stronger its prediction ability, the higher its weight, versus the weaker its had ability, the weaker its weight will be. The formula for calculating the TF-IDF value of keyword i is:

$$(\mathbf{TF-IDF})_i = \mathbf{TF}_i * \mathbf{IDF}_i \tag{3}$$

In this paper, the text data collected from Xiaohongshu and bilibili are processed to build a corpus, where a note is a document, and the keywords are extracted from the documents obtained from Xiaohongshu and bilibili respectively with the help of TF-IDF algorithm, and the top 50 keywords are selected after passing the threshold screening.

**Topic modelling**

To explore the underlying structure of text data, unsupervised machine learning algorithms can circumvent human labeling by using machine clustering algorithms[9][1]. Topic modelling can be used to identify implicit topic structure relationships in text data by mining the local period relationships based on the cyclic clustering of co-occurring words. The Latent Dirichlet Distribution Algorithm (Latent Dirichlet Allocation, abbreviated as LDA) is used in this study to construct themes for lifestyle-related texts collected from the Xiaohongshu platform. Each node is sized according to word frequency, and nodes of the same color represent the same topic, while red nodes indicate co-occurring words of more than one issue.

The LDA topic model is a hierarchical Bayesian model that includes three levels: document, topic and word. In this paper, Xiaohongshu and bilibili are used as text data crawling platforms, where a user note in Xiaohongshu platform is a document, and each document has several potential topics, each topic which is the probability distribution of all words in the vocabulary. the LDA model treats the topic mixture weight θas an implied random variable with T-dimensional parameters, and introduces a Dirichlet prior for the topic mixture weight θ. The formula for the Dirichlet distribution is :

$$\mathbf{Dir(}\alpha_1 \dots, \ \alpha_r\mathbf{)} = \frac{\Gamma(\Sigma_j \alpha_j)}{\Pi_j \Gamma(\alpha_j)} \prod_{j=1}^{T} \theta_j^{\alpha_i - 1} \tag{4}$$

Where the parameters $\alpha_1$, ..., $\alpha_T$ are hyperparameters of the polynomial $\theta = P(\theta_1, ..., \theta_T)$ and each hyperparameter $\alpha_j$ can be interpreted as a prior for the number of times subject j is sampled from a text, where $\alpha_1 = \alpha_2 = ... = \alpha_T = \alpha$ and the Dirichlet and polynomial distributions are conjugate distributions.

# 4 Integration of brand communication into daily life

## 4.1 Bringing communication themes to life

It is the theme of brand communication that represents the brand's image conveyed to consumers and its position in the consumer's mind. Using keyword co-occurrence analysis, Liu Dong studied the hot topics in lifestyle through cluster analysis[4]. According to Li Yong , theme-setting issues are generally expressed in headlines and copy, and keywords are extracted in order to study narrative themes[3].

In this paper, the TF-IDF algorithm is used to extract keywords from the user text data which was collected in the Xiaohongshu platform, and draw a word cloud map based on the word frequency [8]. As shown in Figure 1, the core words in the text of Little Red Book are "Minimal", "Solitude", "Self" and other words with strong personal life style. The development of Internet technology has broken the boundaries of time and space, but also brought about the problem of homogenisation of information on the Internet, therefore, brands should focus on showing their own style in the communication process. In addition, high frequency words include the health-related words, like "Fitness", "Rest", "Camping", "Outdoor" and etc.. These words show that the health-related discussions are still at the forefront of lifestyle topics, and now the outdoor sports become more attractive to people. "Home", "Design", "Furnishing" and other topics related to house design also received more attention from users, because home is the main resting place for most people. In comparison to the past, people's needs for homes are not only functional but also aesthetically pleasing.

The current interpretation of "lifestyle" by social media users is mostly based on the perspective of recording and sharing their daily life, focusing on healthy living conditions and beautiful living environments, with healthy living conditions including physical strength and spiritual healing, and the style of living shown is mainly minimalist and shows personal characteristics. Therefore, brands should incorporate the modern perspective on life into brand communication. Meanwhile, brands should pay attention to whether it can visually create the life scenario experience that users need, and trigger their life feelings while meeting their expectations for a healthy, healing, beautiful and minimalist life. Brands can even adopt a self-referential perspective to show how contemporary people are living their lives and achieve brand resonance. In addition to recreating people's life scenarios, it is important to find the hot topics in the "lifestyle" category to give consumers a positive and healthy attitude towards life and to further stimulate the continuation of these topics.

**Fig. 1.**Users content word cloud based on the keyword "lifestyle"

## 4.2 Bringing communication content to life

In order to select specific narrative content, this paper uses unsupervised machine learning (LDA) to analyze the text content of the body of notes collected on the Xiaohongshu platform. The text content can be categorized into four themes in Figure 2, and the top ten high-frequency words are shown in Table 1 based on the topic-word distribution. In topic 1, the focus is on self-improvement, with "enhancement" as the core clusters. In these clusters, words such as "change", "work", "learning", and "effort" can be used to represent skills enhancement material. There are also words such as "self", "hope", "happiness", and "habit", which are indicative of a focus on the inner self. This shows that users, when dealing with the topic of "lifestyle", value the growth process in their lives, including external achievements and internal abundance. The concept of "self-improvement" therefore occupies a prominent position in the lives of many people. Topic 2 Interaction, including words such as "vlog", "friends", and other words that represent interactive scenarios. The development of social media platforms has provided a platform for consumers to interact and build interactions that influence their willingness to buy. There is a hashtag for "shopping unboxing" on the Xiaohongshu platform, including occasional shopping sharing as well as regular sharing of shopping by month, season, and festival. It is through this interactive form of sharing that we can reach out to consumers and guide their consumption behavior. Consequently, consumers cannot be ignored when it comes to the consumption scenario. Co-creation of content with users has become an important trend in brand communication as a result of the gradual flattening of the information dissemination hierarchy. Topic 3 Health and Relaxation, with "relaxation" and "feeling" as the core, including "health", "exercise", "self", and other words that express a healthy lifestyle. Due to the recent epidemic, the topic of "health," including physical and mental health, has become a hot button issue. As these words are associated, they suggest that a healthy lifestyle is essential as well as relaxation through a healthy lifestyle. Consequently, health and relaxation are the states of life that people seek in the current social context. Topic 4 Inner Feelings, with "feeling" and "enjoy" as core clusters, including "meditation" and "yoga". The act of activity that focuses on perception. By sharing their lives, people begin to highlight their feelings and consciously explore their inner perceptions. Additionally, words such as "health", "beautiful", and "love" imply that the pursuit of a better life is the goal of self-exploration.

Therefore, basing on the collected user texts, it is clear that the current interpretation of lifestyle which focused on four themes: Self-improvement, Consumption and Interaction, Health and Relaxation, and Inner Feelings. Therefore, brands should integrate the topics of self-growth and self-healing into brand communication content, focusing on consumers' feelings and highlighting the empathetic and positive brand image and attitude in the communication process.

**Table 1.** The results for topics related to the content of the Xiaohongshu

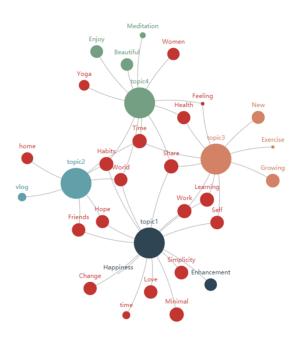| Topic Number | Theme words sampled (top ten) |
| --- | --- |
| Topic 1 | Time, Effort, Habit, Learning, Home, Share, Choice, Sport, Photography, Hope |
| Topic 2 | Minimalism, Self, Learning, Share, Time, Health, Sport, Work, New, Effort |
| Topic 3 | Time, Enjoyment, Strength, Habit, Yoga, Seeing, Children, Feeling, Health, Sharing |
| Topic 4 | Minimal, Time, Growing, Sharing, Descipline, Discontinuation, Self, Choice, Happiness, Home |



**Fig. 2.** Thematic model of the body content of Xiaohongshu

## 4.3 Communication scenarios come to life

The rapid development of Internet technology has brought new changes to communication. Scene propagation has become the new communication form in the mobile Internet era, and scene-based communication thinking has become the new mindset that brands need to establish in the new media era. In 2014, Robert Scoble pointed out that in the future information

communication will enter the scene era in his book <Age of Context:Mobile, Sensors,Data and the Future>[10]. Li Qi summarised the relevant discussions at home and abroad and pointed out that scene propagation is based on the real-time status of people, and provides specific information or service matching to them, with the support of the "five forces of scenario"，including big data, sensors, positioning systems, mobile terminals, social media, and with the help of social media to achieve extensive and accurate information dissemination[11]. Wang Junfeng believed that scenario-based thinking is centred on user scenarios and aims to serve user needs[12]. Therefore, the construction of communication scenarios should focus on users' needs, and the online traces left by users on social media can help brands grasp users' needs immediately and provide timely information services to them. Based on the above analysis of user text contents and the construction of concern themes, brands can establish the living communication situation in both online and offline channels.

### Building living virtual scenarios on online channel

At present, the mainstream social media platforms (such as Xiaohongshu, Weibo, WeChat, etc.) disseminate information by using a combination of images and videos. Among them, pictures and videos are more likely to bring users the better scene experience, in which short videos are particularly popular among social media users, and their fragmented and instant characteristics are in line with the fast-paced lifestyle of contemporary people. Combined with the above living communication theme and content, brands should incorporates users' emotional needs for self-improvement and self-change in the communication process , and adds minimalist elements or family elements to the visual design of images and videos, which is closer to the actual life of users and minimize the distance between users and the brands.

### Reproduction of the life-like physical scenes on offline channel

Offline communication forms can help users gain a more immersive experience, such as flash shops, themed exhibitions and themed events etc.. At the same time, the emergence and development of smart wearable devices has enhanced the user's sense of reality. Therefore, in the process of offline brand communication, brands can combine their own brand image, brand attitude and products through the recreation of actual life scenes, deepening the link among brands, products and users' lives. According to the analysis of the users' text contents about lifestyle, the topic of health is also receiving continuous attention, so brands can also highlight the concept of healthy living by organising offline outdoor activities, strengthening the interaction and communication between brands and users in real life.

Through the dual interaction between online and offline, the brands can continually deepen the connection between the brands and the users, and combine the users' concern issues to explore their actual needs, so as to gain more attention from the users and continuously increase their loyalty and purchase intention for the brands.

## 5    Conclusions

This paper explores the practical path of brand communication on lifestyle from three aspects: communication theme, communication content and communication scenario, through keyword extraction and theme modelling methods. In the study of the living theme of brand communication,which should be based on the perspective of daily life, highlighting the main

theme of healthy life and the attitude of individual life. In the study of the living communication content, user text content is divided into four themes based on the thematic modelling: Self-improvement, Consumption and Interaction, Health and Relaxation, and Inner Feelings, providing a thinking direction about the living brand communication content. In the study of the living communication situation, the dual-channel model of building virtual scenes for online living and recreating physical scenes for offline living is used to deepen the immersive experience of users in the process of brand communication and to continuously minimize the distance between brands and users.

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