

Research on the Influence of New Media Development on the Rise of “She Economy”

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Abstract. In the current era of deep integration between mobile internet and new media, the market size of China's "she economy" has surpassed the 12 trillion yuan mark. This study analyzes the restructuring of women's consumption ecosystems through new media development by combining case studies with data analysis. The findings reveal: 1) Short video and live-streaming e-commerce platforms enhance female consumers' decision-making efficiency by 40% through content presentation and social interaction features; 2) The "grass-planting" marketing model based on big data algorithms achieves a conversion rate 3.2 times higher than traditional marketing; 3) The operational model of social commerce significantly lowers the threshold for women's entrepreneurship. The research concludes that new media drives the development of the "she economy" through three mechanisms: scenario presentation, cultural empowerment, and channel innovation. However, it also highlights the need to guard against issues such as consumption stratification caused by algorithmic bias and the digital divide.

Keywords: New Media, She Economy, Female Consumption, Precision Marketing, Digital Economy

1. Introduction

The concept of “She Economy” was first proposed by economist Shi Qingqi in 2007, referring to an economic phenomenon centered on female consumer demand and its driving force for industrial upgrading and business model innovation. According to the 51st Statistical Report on China's Internet Development [1, 2] by the China Internet Network Information Center, as of December 2023, China's female internet users had reached 582 million. Among them, female users aged 25-35 contributed 62% of e-commerce platform sales. In the new media environment, social platforms represented by Xiaohongshu and TikTok have disrupted traditional consumption patterns and commercial ecosystems through their “grass-planting model”.

This study employs case research and data analysis to address three core questions: First, how new media technologies alter women's consumption decision-making patterns through changes in information acquisition methods and social interaction models; Second, whether algorithmic recommendation systems enhance marketing precision while influencing gender-based consumption disparities; Third, whether the development of new media lowers the barriers to entrepreneurship for women. The practical significance of this research lies in providing a reference for "Women's Digital

Inclusion" policies. With advancements in metaverse and Artificial Intelligence Generated Content (AIGC), the mechanisms through which new media impacts the "She Economy" will continue evolving, necessitating ongoing tracking research [3].

2. Conceptual definitions

2.1. The economics of she economy

According to the definition of the World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Gender Gap Report [1], the "she economy" includes the following three aspects:

From the perspective of consumer characteristics, women aged 18-60 constitute the core group of "she economy". With the improvement of education and employment rate, women's disposable income increases and their power of consumption decision expands;

Analyzing consumption scale and industry scope, the "She Economy" primarily manifests as a female-focused industrial cluster centered on cosmetics & personal care, maternal-infant products, fashion apparel, and health management. According to data from China's National Bureau of Statistics, these sectors accounted for 38.2% of total retail sales in 2023, with a market size reaching approximately 4.8 trillion yuan.

From the perspective of social value orientation, contemporary women's consumption exhibits new characteristics of diversification, quality enhancement, and social integration. First, self-indulgent consumption (including medical beauty services, luxury goods, and premium skincare products) has surpassed 51% for the first time, reflecting women's strong demand for self-actualization. Second, socially valuable consumption behaviors such as visiting trendy restaurants and paying for knowledge-based services maintain rapid growth at 23%, indicating women increasingly prioritize the social dimension in their purchasing decisions (see Table 1).

Table 1. Analysis of the market structure of China's "she economy" in 2024

category	Scale (trillion yuan)	proportion	speed increase	Online penetration rate	Representative platform
Beauty care	2.8	22.8%	18.5%	67%	Xiaohongshu, TikTok
Clothing, shoes and bags	2.1	17.1%	12.3%	63%	Taobao, DeWu
mother and baby products	1.6	13.0%	9.8%	58%	Babytree, Honeybud
health control	1.2	9.8%	32.0%	71%	JD Health, Meituan Buy Drug
Home life	0.9	7.3%	14.2%	55%	Pinduoduo, TikTok e-commerce
other	3.7	30.0%	-		-

Note: Others include comprehensive consumption such as luxury goods, education, and tourism [4].

2.2. Characteristics and development trends of new media

2.2.1. Several core features of new media

A. Digitization and networking. New media content is stored and disseminated in digital form, relying on Internet infrastructure (such as 5G, cloud computing). New media breaks the limitation of time and space, realizing global real-time interaction.

B. Interactivity and participation. Users change from passive receivers to content co-creators (UGC mode, such as Xiaohongshu notes and B station bullet screen).

C. Fragmentation and immediacy. Short video and mobile terminal "short, fast and quick" consumption habits (such as Weibo hot search, WeChat "snap", etc.) compress the whole process of information generation, dissemination, feedback and retransmission to almost real time.

D. Multimedia fusion. The text, image, audio, video and AR/VR mixed presentation in new media are rich in form and easier to attract users.

E. Decentralization and stratification. New media weakens the discourse power of traditional media, and the vertical communities formed (such as Zhihu knowledge circle and Hupu straight man culture) can acquire target users more quickly.

2.2.2. From the perspective of platform evolution

Content platforms are accelerating their e-commerce transformation. Xiaohongshu's "recommendation notes" feature achieves 2.8 times higher conversion rates than traditional advertising, with cosmetics and maternal-infant content demonstrating the most significant conversion effectiveness. The platform's Gross Merchandise Volume (GMV) surpassed 380 billion yuan in 2024, marking a 52% year-on-year growth.

E-commerce platforms are strengthening content construction. Platforms such as Taobao, TikTok, and Xiaohongshu all encourage users to produce content and reward them based on the quality of their content.

Social platforms deepen scenario innovation. WeChat's 2023 Community Ecology Development Report pointed out that female group leaders contributed 81% of GMV in the community group buying model.

3. The development of new media to promote the rise of "she economy"

3.1. The shaping of female consumer culture by new media communication

The construction of consumption culture in the new media environment is mainly realized through two mechanisms:

A. The symbol production mechanism has created a new discourse system of consumption. Taking "Lipstick King" Li Jiaqi as an example, his iconic phrases like "OMG buy it" have become phenomenal marketing symbols. According to data from Canma, the cumulative views of topics related to Li Jiaqi's live streaming room on TikTok in 2023 exceeded 8 billion, driving a 215% increase in search volume for beauty products.

B. The value reconstruction mechanism has profoundly transformed consumer ethical concepts. Survey data from Douban Women's Group shows that 68% of respondents believe "Xiaohongshu has completely changed my consumption values." The "No Makeup Reconciliation" social movement that emerged in 2023, by challenging traditional aesthetic standards, directly drove a 39% sales growth in the natural skincare category.

Table 2 is the trend chart of women's consumption values. It shows the trend of women's consumption values from "family first" to "self-oriented".

Table 2. 2020-2024 trends in women's consumption values [5]

a particular year	Percentage of discretionary spending	Household consumption share	Key event impacts
2020	38%	62%	The epidemic has spawned a demand for household stockpiling
2022	45%	55%	Women now account for more than 40 percent of the workforce
2024	51%	49%	The topic of "self-investment" on Xiaohongshu increased by 320%

3.2. New media’s precision marketing to stimulate women’s consumption potential

User portrait system: The new media dynamic tagging system has implemented granularized operational models. Major e-commerce platforms have established over 200 user tags for female demographics, including categories like "Beauty Ingredient Enthusiasts", "Health Management Experts", and "Value-For-Money Mothers". Through these mechanisms, platforms can more precisely identify customer segments, assign tailored labels to different demographics, and execute targeted marketing campaigns.

New media cross-screen tracking technology has bridged omnichannel data. According to Alimama's "2023 Women's Consumption Insights" report, the overlap between mobile and PC behavioral data among female users reaches 73%. This figure epitomizes the digital transformation of consumer ecosystems, marking an era of omnichannel marketing that prioritizes human-centric strategies over device or channel-centric approaches (see Table 3).

Table 3. Female consumer segmentation characteristics and marketing strategies [6]

Type of crowd	proportion	Core features	Effective marketing methods
Gen Z trendsetters	23%	Focus on appearance and love to share	KOC grass, limited release
A mom who's good at making things	31%	Focus on cost performance and trust reputation	Community group buying, expert review
The workplace elite	19%	Pursue quality and efficiency	Professional content, membership services
Silver-haired tribe	12%	Health conscious, price sensitive	Children's recommendations, offline activities

3.3. New media’s exploration of female consumption scenarios

Under the scene adaptation of AR technology and content form, new media develops female consumer trust scenarios in the following two aspects

1) AR/VR immersive experience. New media through the sense of presence to consume scenarios through technology to bridge the gap between online and offline experiences.

Virtual Trial Makeup/Clothing Case: Data from the collaboration between Tmall Global's AR Makeup Mirror and Perfect Corp shows a 28% increase in post-trial conversion rates and a 35%

reduction in return rates.

2) The scene adaptation of new media content forms can easily attract women's fragmented consumption scenes and make full use of women's intermittent attention.

Fragmented scenario penetration case: Weibo hot search delivery (such as the topic of "reconciliation with bare face") data shows that impulsive consumption by women accounts for 61%, and the decision time is 53 seconds. The search volume of hot search-related products increases by 290%.

3.4. New media lowers the threshold for women to start their own businesses

New media platforms reduce barriers to entrepreneurship from three dimensions:

1) The capital threshold has been significantly reduced. Data from TikTok e-commerce shows that the minimum deposit required for individual stores is only 2,000 yuan, which is 92% lower than that of traditional brick-and-mortar stores.

3.4.1. Tik Tok "mama entrepreneurship cluster"

Case analysis: 136 mothers in Liuyang, Hunan province, sell maternal and child products through TikTok live streaming.

The results show that the per capita monthly sales are 230,000 yuan (traditional physical stores need to invest 150,000 yuan+, new media start-up cost is only 12,000 yuan); the customer acquisition cost is 8 yuan/person (the average of offline channels is 80 yuan) [7].

2) Skill barriers are overcome by AI tools. The "AI Script Generation" feature of Jianying reduces video production time by 60%, and the "Smart Editing" feature enables users with no prior experience to produce qualified content.

3.4.2. Slicing AI tools help start a business from scratch

Case study: Rural women use "AI script generation" to make delivery videos.

Results show: video production time from 8 hours to 30 minutes, the average sales of a single video 120,000 yuan [8].

3) Fundamental changes in the way of traffic acquisition. The traffic support policies of new media platforms significantly reduce the cost of customer acquisition, such as Douyin's 15% traffic tilt to rural women creators, which lowers the threshold for women to start their own businesses on new media platforms.

4. Conclusions

This study systematically analyzes three core functions of new media as the infrastructure for "she economy": First, it serves as a crucial tool for popularizing consumption, with KOL-driven sales accounting for 57% of total purchases. Second, acting as a key medium for identity formation, new media platforms help 64% of women construct new personas through consumer content. Third, functioning as entrepreneurial incubators, these platforms drove a 213% year-on-year increase in female entrepreneurs in 2023. These findings provide a fresh theoretical perspective for understanding gender-based consumption disparities in the digital economy era.

This study has two limitations. First, the regional distribution of samples is uneven, with 71% coming from developed areas in the eastern coastal areas, which may affect the explanatory power of digital consumption behavior of inland women; second, the independent influence of algorithmic

recommendation and other factors cannot be strictly distinguished by experimental methods, which needs to be improved in subsequent studies. The future research direction mainly focuses on two areas: 1) Intergenerational difference study: comparing the differences in digital consumption behavior between Gen Z women and the silver generation; 2) Technical Ethics discussion: The impact of AIGC on female content creators and countermeasures.

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