

Research on cross-cultural marketing strategies of new energy vehicles under the background of globalization

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Abstract: In the context of intensifying global energy shortages and continuously rising environmental pressures, new energy vehicles, as a key pathway to transform the energy structure and achieve carbon neutrality goals, are becoming a strategic focus of global industrial transformation. This paper, from the perspective of international market competition, systematically constructs a marketing theory framework for the new energy vehicle industry. It provides an in-depth analysis of the differentiated policy barriers, localization challenges, and market opportunities faced by new energy vehicle companies in cross-cultural market environments, offering decision-making support for formulating precise international marketing strategies.

Key words: Marketing; globalization; new energy vehicles

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1 Research background

The new energy vehicle industry has entered a period of rapid global growth, with its market boundaries continuously breaking geographical constraints and forming a multi-polar market network across continents. As a strategic solution to address energy security crises and ecological pressures, new energy vehicles not only bear the historical mission of a transportation energy revolution but have also become a focal point in the global consumer market. Notably, as industrial competition extends from product technology to cultural values, cross-cultural marketing strategies are increasingly valuable. They are not only key drivers for breaking through regional markets but also core variables in reshaping international competitive landscapes.

In the cross-cultural market, cultural characteristics of different countries and regions exhibit significant differences in dimensions such as power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation versus short-term orientation. These cultural differences not only shape consumers' unique values and behavioral patterns but also profoundly influence their consumption decision-making processes, thereby placing more refined demands on the formulation of marketing strategies by companies.

Therefore, for new energy vehicle companies, it is particularly important to deeply understand and proactively adapt to the differences under various cultural backgrounds. The innovation of new energy vehicles goes beyond merely upgrading transportation; it is also a concentrated manifestation of environmental protection, technological innovation, and changes in lifestyle. Consumers' acceptance and purchasing decisions are largely influenced by their cultural environment. For example, in some cultures, environmental and sustainable development concepts are deeply ingrained, becoming a significant consideration for consumers when choosing new energy vehicles; whereas in other cultures, the performance of cars and brand value may be more valued.

2 the development of new energy vehicles under the background of globalization

2.1 the trend of globalization

The wave of globalization is profoundly reshaping the global economic landscape, reinforcing international trade ties and capital flows to build a highly interconnected world economy. In terms of technology diffusion, the awakening of environmental awareness and accelerated technological iteration create a resonance effect, driving a continuous rise in

global demand for new energy vehicles. The mechanism of technology sharing significantly shortens product development cycles, accelerates the transformation of innovative outcomes, and offers consumers a wider range of product choices, compelling companies to maintain a continuous innovation drive to sustain their competitive edge. On the market expansion front, the reduction of trade barriers and market access openness provide companies with opportunities for global layout while also exposing them to comprehensive challenges from international competitors. This requires companies to develop a dual-driven capability — not only maintaining the vitality of technological and product innovation but also establishing a deep market insight system to achieve localized roots and sustainable development in the context of global competition.

2.2 Development status of new energy vehicles

2.2.1 Marketing development status of new energy vehicles

Since the State Council issued the "Energy Saving and New Energy Vehicle Industry Development Plan (2012-2020)" in 2012, China's new energy vehicle industry has developed into a large-scale and diversified pattern under the dual impetus of policy support and technological innovation. By the release of the "New Energy Vehicle Industry Development Plan (2021-2035)" in 2020, breakthroughs in core technologies and market penetration rates have accelerated, placing the industry at a critical stage where both quantity and quality are being enhanced.

In terms of sales model innovation, the market is showing a multi-dimensional and progressive trend. Traditional automakers like BYD and Geely continue to expand their dealer networks, but some companies are beginning to explore direct channels, such as BYD opening experience centers in prime business districts. In contrast, Tesla's direct channel model has been widely emulated. By integrating online and offline operations, creating experiential scenarios, and implementing a unified pricing strategy nationwide, Tesla has established brand touchpoints in prime commercial locations, reinforcing perceptions of technology and premium consumption.

Despite significant progress in the industry, structural contradictions remain prominent. In terms of sales systems, most companies have yet to fully leverage the synergies between digital platforms and emerging channels, with traditional 4S dealership models still dominant, creating a generational gap in experiential marketing compared to new entrants like Tesla. In core technology areas, breakthroughs are needed in battery energy density, charging efficiency, and thermal management systems, while some key raw materials remain dependent on imports. Regarding infrastructure, the uneven distribution of public charging stations and fragmented technical standards hinder user convenience. Additionally, market pain points such as used car residual value management and adaptability to extreme conditions remain unresolved.

2.2.2 Sales of new energy vehicles

Since China launched the comprehensive promotion and application of new energy vehicles in 2013, the industry has seen explosive growth. In 2014 and 2015, sales increased by over 300% year-over-year, marking a leap forward. From 2016 to 2022, except for a phased adjustment in 2019 and a slowdown due to the reduction of subsidies and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the overall trend remained steadily upward. Despite policy fluctuations and market challenges, China's new energy vehicle production and sales have consistently ranked first globally for eight consecutive years, demonstrating strong market resilience and industrial competitiveness.

2.3 Global development trend of new energy vehicle market

2.3.1 Rapid growth of market size

The global new energy vehicle market continues to expand strongly, with deliveries surpassing the 3.2 million milestone in the first quarter of 2024, marking a significant 25% increase from the same period last year. Industry forecasts indicate that by 2030, the share of new energy vehicles in the global passenger car market will exceed half, and the market size is expected to reach a new peak.

2.3.2 Accelerating and improving the quality of technological innovation

The field of new energy vehicles has achieved leapfrog development in battery technology, power systems, and intelligent driving. Specifically, the energy density of power batteries continues to break through, the efficiency of accompanying charging facilities has significantly improved, and the range of single-charge vehicles has greatly increased.

These technological breakthroughs collectively drive the deep transformation of new energy vehicle models from concept validation to practical application.

2.3.3 Acceleration of infrastructure construction

Globally, governments and companies are actively promoting the strategic layout of charging infrastructure, improving energy supply systems by expanding charging networks and optimizing site configurations.

2.3.4 Diversification of competitive landscape

The new energy vehicle industry is undergoing profound changes in competition. Traditional automakers and tech companies are forming a multi-dimensional competitive landscape through technological integration and resource consolidation, accelerating the blurring of industry boundaries and reshaping market dynamics.

2.3.5 Acceleration of global layout

China's new energy vehicle industry is accelerating its global strategic layout. Domestic brands represented by BYD, NIO, and XPeng have rapidly entered the core competitive circle of the global new energy vehicle market through technology export and localized operations. This cross-border development trend has generated significant market cultivation effects. On one hand, it enhances consumers' understanding of intelligent electric mobility through a global product matrix. On the other hand, it increases user acceptance by building overseas service networks, fostering a positive interaction between demand and supply. This injects strong momentum into the large-scale expansion of the global new energy vehicle market.

2.4 Globalization characteristics of the new energy vehicle market

2.4.1 Rapid growth in exports

From the perspective of China's new energy bus exports, referring to the CPCA data of the Passenger Car Market Information Association, it showed a rapid growth trend from 2018 to 2022. In 2022, China's new energy bus exports exceeded 7,000 units, with a year-on-year growth of more than 140%.

2.4.2 Export market penetration rate exceeds 15%

From the perspective of the proportion of new energy bus exports in the total bus exports, the changing trend is consistent with the trend of new energy bus exports. From 2018 to 2022, it showed a rapid upward trend, exceeding 15% in 2022. Driven by the global trend of energy conservation, emission reduction and low-carbon environmental protection, this proportion is expected to further increase.

2.4.3 Large new energy buses account for about half of the export volume

In terms of the export volume of different types of new energy buses, in 2022, the export volume of large new energy buses in China accounted for about 50%, followed by medium-sized new energy buses and light new energy buses.

2.4.4 The import amount of China's new energy vehicles fluctuated upward

In terms of import amount, the import amount of China's new energy vehicle industry showed a fluctuating upward trend from 2018 to 2022. In 2022, the total import amount of China's new energy vehicles was 7.66 billion US dollars, with a year-on-year growth of 0.04%.

3 Cross-cultural marketing environment of new energy vehicle industry

3.1 The influence of cultural diversity on marketing

Cultural genes profoundly shape consumers' value orientations, thinking patterns, and behavioral characteristics. These cultural imprints directly determine the success or failure of marketing strategies. In the field of new energy vehicles, cultural diversity profoundly influences the formulation and implementation of marketing strategies through two mechanisms: one is the diversity of consumer values and their cognitive differences; the other is the adaptive adjustment of communication strategies in cross-cultural contexts.

3.2 Characteristics of cross-cultural consumer behavior

In the process of building a global marketing strategy, new energy vehicle companies must deeply understand and proactively adapt to the behavioral characteristics of consumers in different cultural contexts. Differences in cultural values

directly lead to significant differentiation in target markets' perceptions of new energy vehicles. This differentiation is reflected not only in varying degrees of emphasis on attributes such as environmental value, technological innovation, and social symbolism but also in the cultural specificity of consumer decision-making logic.

4 the main challenges of cross-cultural marketing

4.1 Cultural misunderstanding and barriers

Cross-cultural marketing in the context of globalization faces two core challenges: cultural misunderstanding and cultural barriers. Cultural misunderstanding primarily manifests as differences in values, misinterpretation of symbols, and conflicts in etiquette and customs— Consumers from different cultures may interpret marketing messages differently due to varying consumption perspectives. Misuse of colors or graphics can easily cause aversion, while inappropriate communication of etiquette can damage brand image. On the other hand, about cultural barriers, cultural barriers generally include language barriers, religious beliefs, laws and regulations, and differences in consumption habits.

4.2 Brand positioning and cultural adaptability

Brand positioning is a strategic task to shape the unique image and value proposition of a brand, with cultural adaptability being its key. New energy vehicle brands need to convey consistent core values globally, but the methods and emphases should be adjusted according to cultural differences to ensure that information crosses cultural divides and is correctly interpreted by consumers from different cultures. This requires that advertising language, visual elements, brand stories, and marketing activities all possess cultural sensitivity to build a globally enduring brand image.

4.3 Cultural sensitivity of marketing communication

Cultural sensitivity is a core element in the cross-cultural adaptation of marketing messages. Companies need to deeply understand the cultural characteristics and consumption preferences of their target markets, paying particular attention to the differentiated interpretation of cultural symbols such as symbols, colors, and language, as well as the cultural adaptation of direct and indirect communication styles. In selecting marketing channels, it is essential to respect the differences in preferences for advertising media, social platforms, and interaction methods across different cultures. At the same time, the alignment between digital marketing strategies and local social media usage habits must be considered to ensure that information is effectively communicated and positively resonates with the audience.

5 Opportunities for cross-cultural marketing

5.1 Opportunities for innovative marketing strategies

Cultural diversity is driving innovation in marketing strategies, prompting companies to break free from traditional frameworks and develop more innovative and flexible approaches. Consumers from different cultural backgrounds exhibit significant differences in their perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing behaviors toward new energy vehicles. This necessitates the development of refined and personalized marketing strategies to establish effective cultural resonance.

5.2 Market expansion opportunities of cultural diversity

Cultural diversity presents three opportunities for new energy vehicle companies: First, expanding the consumer base. By leveraging the consumption needs and value systems of different cultures, companies can develop localized products and services to enhance their global market competitiveness. Second, promoting market segmentation. By analyzing cultural characteristics and consumer preferences, companies can accurately target niche markets such as eco-friendly or technology-driven sectors. Third, stimulating innovation. The lifestyles and aesthetic preferences in diverse cultures can empower innovations in car design, functional development, and service models, thereby enriching the product lineup and meeting differentiated needs.

5.3 Opportunities for building a global brand image

Shaping a cross-cultural appeal brand image requires balancing global shared values with local cultural characteristics.

New energy vehicle brands can leverage the global consensus on environmental protection and sustainable development to build a unified value proposition, evoking cultural resonance. At the same time, companies should adopt a "global integration, local differentiation" strategy.

6 Implementation of cross-cultural marketing strategies

6.1 Market segmentation strategies of different cultures

The core of market segmentation strategy lies in accurately identifying the unique needs and preferences of consumers from different cultures to develop localized products and services. The acceptance of new energy vehicles varies by culture: the environmentally driven market focuses more on energy savings and social responsibility, while the technology-oriented market emphasizes innovative alternative values. Companies need to deeply analyze cultural values and tailor product positioning and marketing messages that match their target markets to meet personalized demands.

6.2 Formulation of cross-cultural brand strategy

Cross-cultural brand strategies need to balance global uniformity with local cultural characteristics. Companies must deeply understand the core values, behavioral habits, and brand expectations of global consumers. Taking new energy vehicles as an example, their environmental value needs to be adapted to different cultures, fitting the varying perceptions of sustainability.

6.3 Management of cross-cultural consumer relations

The core of cross-cultural consumer relationship management lies in accurately grasping the unique needs and expectations of consumers from different cultural backgrounds. Cultural differences profoundly influence consumers' expectations regarding service quality, communication methods, and customer experience. For instance, some cultures emphasize personalized services and etiquette norms, while others prefer efficient and direct interaction models. New energy vehicle companies need to conduct in-depth market research and cultural analysis, integrating cultural insights into the entire customer service process, including front-end support, product design, and after-sales mechanisms, to ensure that services are highly aligned with local cultural characteristics.

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