

A Brief Analysis of Luckin Coffee's Public Relations Strategy on the TikTok Platform

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Abstract

In the current era where short videos are reshaping the landscape of information dissemination, the TikTok platform has become the primary battleground for corporate public relations management. As of December 2024, China's short video user base reached 1.04 billion, with a usage rate of 93.8%, driving the public relations industry to accelerate its transition from the text-and-image era into the visual era. This study takes Luckin Coffee as the research subject to explore its public relations strategies on the TikTok platform. The findings reveal that Luckin Coffee's PR practices on TikTok transcend the traditional "information release" paradigm, forming a deeply integrated model of "brand-effect-sales synergy" by co-creating content to build a brand personality that "plays skillfully and boldly," leveraging high-density interactions to foster egalitarian dialogue relationships, utilizing tools like live streaming and secondary cards to achieve closed-loop communication and sales, and resolving potential crises through rapid, flexible, and humanized responses. On the TikTok platform, Luckin's interaction efficiency far surpasses other platforms, contributing 80% of its total interaction volume. This strategy has successfully helped Luckin shape a brand image that is youthful, highly interactive, and adept at meme usage, achieving the transformation from traffic to sales and ultimately brand loyalty. The study provides valuable insights for corporate public relations management in the short video era.

Keywords: Luckin Coffee; TikTok; Public Relations; Social Media; Brand Communication; User Interaction

1. Introduction

The rise of short videos is reshaping the landscape of information dissemination. From a developmental perspective, the precursor to Kuaishou, "GIF Kuaishou," was launched in 2011, marking the initial emergence of short video formats. In 2013, platforms like Miaopai and Weishi began to emerge. Starting in 2016, with the widespread adoption of 4G networks and the

maturation of intelligent recommendation algorithms, Douyin (TikTok) and Kuaishou rose to prominence. After 2020, with the deep integration of technologies such as 5G and artificial intelligence, short videos gradually transcended their entertainment-oriented attributes and expanded into diverse fields including government services, e-commerce, and online education, becoming a core platform for public relations activities (Da, 2025). As of December 2024, China's short video user base reached 1.04 billion, with a usage rate of 93.8%, maintaining the top position in the online audiovisual application segment for consecutive years. Against this backdrop, Douyin (TikTok), as a core short video platform, has become the primary battleground for corporate public relations communication due to its strong interactivity, high user engagement, rapid content viral spread, and "interest-based e-commerce" attributes (Zhang & Chen, 2025).

Since its establishment in 2017, Luckin Coffee has rapidly grown into one of the leading brands in China's coffee market by leveraging an operational model of "high cost-performance products + digital operations + extensive network coverage." Its brand vision is "to make good coffee affordable and accessible to everyone," precisely targeting the market gap dominated by high-priced specialty coffee, attracting a large number of price-sensitive young white-collar workers and students. After initial rapid expansion and subsequent strategic adjustments, Luckin has continuously focused on product innovation and brand marketing, creating a series of phenomenal hits such as Fresh Coconut Latte, Soy Sauce Latte, and Black Myth Tengyun Americano. According to incomplete statistics, as of August 2024, Luckin has collaborated with 18 high-profile IPs, including Line Dog, The Story of a Rose, A Chinese Odyssey, and actress Loopy (Wang, 2024). Its public relations and marketing practices on the Douyin (TikTok) platform have garnered significant industry attention due to features like frequent collaborations, strong user engagement, and integrated brand-effect-sales strategies (Li, 2024).

A preliminary review of the literature reveals that existing research has largely focused on Luckin's business model or marketing tactics, with insufficient exploration of its systematic public relations strategies on short video platforms—specifically, the underlying mechanisms through which it reshapes brand relationships via content co-creation, egalitarian dialogue, and sales closed-loop. To address this research gap, this study takes Luckin Coffee's official account on the Douyin (TikTok) platform and its related communication activities as the research object, focusing on the following core questions: What specific public relations strategies did Luckin adopt on Douyin (TikTok)? How did these strategies help shape its brand image and build relationships with users? What potential challenges did it face while achieving success?

Theoretically, this study aims to extend and integrate the boundaries of the two-way symmetrical model and the AIVSA model within short video platforms, empirically enriching the understanding of value co-creation in brand-consumer relationships. Practically, it provides valuable insights for similar brands conducting public relations management on short video platforms.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Platform Characteristics

2.1. Brief Overview of Relevant Public Relations Theories

The two-way symmetrical model is a classic theory in public relations, emphasizing equal dialogue and mutual understanding between organizations and the public. In the era of social media, this model has gained new practical applications—users are no longer passive information receivers but can interact with brands in real-time through comments, likes, and shares, participating in content production and dissemination (Zhao, 2024). From the perspective of consumer behavior evolution, from the AIDMA model to the AISAS model, and then to the SICAS model, consumers' information reception methods have shifted from passive acceptance to active searching, and further to experiential perception and interactive communication. Entering the social media era, Professor Duan Chunlin proposed a new consumer behavior model centered on value sharing—AIVSA, where "value identification is the driving force behind consumers' information acquisition and sharing behaviors, and value co-creation is the primary behavioral mode of consumers" (Zhu & Liu, 2024). Luckin's public relations practices on Douyin (TikTok) are a typical embodiment of this model (Huang, 2024).

Integrated marketing communications emphasizes the consistency of information dissemination, as well as the synergy between online and offline channels, sales, and public relations (Zhou, 2025). On the Douyin (TikTok) platform, the boundaries between public relations and marketing are increasingly blurred: a short video may simultaneously serve the functions of brand image building and product promotion, while a live stream acts as both a sales channel and a communication window (Liu, 2025). Luckin's strategy of "integrating brand, performance, and sales" is precisely an extension of the integrated marketing communications concept in the era of short videos (Zhou, 2025). The high integration of social media and real life is transforming consumers' transaction and purchasing behaviors, prompting brand communication to gradually merge with these behaviors, permeating into consumers' daily routines and even becoming an integral part of their lives (Zhu & Liu, 2024).

2.2. Communication Characteristics of the Douyin (TikTok) Platform

The communication characteristics of the Douyin (TikTok) platform can be understood from three dimensions:

Strong interaction and high engagement: The platform constructs a multi-dimensional interactive system through features such as comments, likes, shares, and collaborative filming (Zhao, 2024). Taking Douyin's traffic distribution mechanism as an example, it adopts a decentralized allocation logic: initially, every content piece has the opportunity to access a basic traffic pool, but only videos with high quality, significant shares, comments, and likes are weighted by popularity and enter the recommendation traffic pool (Zhang & Chen, 2025). This mechanism compels brands to prioritize content quality and user interaction (Wu, 2025). Data shows that Luckin's interaction efficiency on the Douyin (TikTok) platform far exceeds that of other platforms, contributing 80% of its total interaction volume (Wu, 2025). Such high interactivity provides the technical foundation for brands to establish deep relationships with users (Zhao, 2024).

The content is short, fast, and easy to imitate: Douyin (TikTok) content follows the "golden 3-second rule," aiming to quickly capture users' attention at the beginning (Chen, S., 2024). Short videos adopt a full-screen vertical format, combined with algorithm-driven continuous playback mechanisms, shifting users from fragmented browsing to fully immersive viewing, significantly enhancing information delivery efficiency and dwell time (Chen, S., 2024). Meanwhile, elements such as challenges, trending memes, and background music are easy to imitate and creatively adapt, driving viral content dissemination (Zhang & Chen, 2025).

The 'interest-based e-commerce' attribute: Douyin (TikTok) connects content with consumption through algorithmic recommendations, allowing users to directly jump to purchases while watching short videos or live streams (Zhang & Chen, 2025). This feature increasingly blurs the line between public relations communication and sales conversion, requiring brands to consider conversion paths during content planning stages (Liu, 2025). From the AIVSA model perspective, brands need to leverage platform big data to gain consumer insights, employ creative formats for targeted communication to attract attention, and establish emotional connections through interactive engagement, ultimately driving consumer behavior and value co-creation (Zhu & Liu, 2024; Huang, 2024).

3. Analysis of Luckin Coffee's Public Relations Strategy on the Douyin (TikTok) Platform

3.1. Strategy One: Content Strategy — Building a Brand Personality of "Being Skilled and Bold in Play"

Empirical description: Product contentization is the core of Luckin's content strategy. Luckin excels at transforming new product launches into highly topical visual and narrative content (Li, 2024). Take the "Black Mythology Cloud Ascending Americano" co-branded with "Black Mythology: Wukong" in 2024 as an example. The collaborative product, paired with 3D limited-edition poster grid cards, co-branded cup covers, and other merchandise, sparked a surge of early morning store visits for purchases (Wang, 2024). The co-branded merchandise included cup covers, paper bags, and Black Mythology 3D limited-edition posters. Since the 3D effect could only be seen with the naked eye, it further stimulated consumer purchasing desire (Wang, 2024). Major social media platforms such as Weibo, Douyin (TikTok), and Xiaohongshu were flooded with coverage of this collaboration, with the #BlackMythologyWukong hashtag skyrocketing to the top of Weibo's trending list and five of the top ten spots on Douyin's hot charts (Wang, 2024). Despite initial issues like system glitches and instant sell-out of merchandise, the event itself demonstrated Luckin's strong ability to transform products into social topics (Li, 2024). In 2025, when co-branded with Duolingo to launch the "Green Sand Latte," the brand released a creative short drama titled "The Birds of Our Marriage," with the first episode garnering over a million likes and seamlessly integrating the co-branded message into the storyline (Wang, 2024).

Life-scenario integration is another crucial approach (Chen, S., 2024). Luckin Coffee extensively showcases consumption scenarios such as offices, commutes, and study breaks on Douyin (TikTok), resonating with users (Chen, S., 2024). The iconic "First-Person Perspective Luckin Barista" video series continues to achieve high engagement with its immersive experience

and entertainment value (Li, 2024). This scenario-based content transforms the brand from an abstract symbol into a tangible companion in daily life (Chen, S., 2024).

Leveraging meme culture has become Luckin Coffee's secret weapon for connecting with young consumers (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025). The brand proactively utilizes trending internet memes and even creates exclusive cultural references (such as "Luckin's lazy fisherfolk culture") to bridge the psychological gap with younger demographics (Li, 2024). During the collaborative pre-launch campaign with Duolingo, the official Duolingo account sparked nationwide speculation through the viral topic "Duolingo is getting married," transforming Luckin's comment sections into vibrant brand-building forums where McDonald's, Meituan, and other brands actively participated (Wang, 2024). This meme mastery has earned Luckin Coffee a reputation as a savvy brand strategist among youth demographics (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025). From a brand positioning perspective, Luckin consistently reinforces its youthful and fashionable image through collaborations with trendy IPs and partnerships with young idols (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025). The current joint campaign targets Luckin's core consumer base aged 24-40, while Duolingo's video audience focuses on 18-30-year-olds, creating overlapping demographics between 24-30 years old with complementary coverage ranges (Wang, 2024).

Theoretical analysis and evaluation: The above practices are not isolated marketing techniques but rather a deep implementation of the "value identification" and "value co-creation" stages of the AIVSA model. First, through "product contentization" and "IP co-branding," Luckin transforms functional products into "social currency" rich in cultural symbols, lowering the threshold for users to identify brand value and driving their active searching and sharing behaviors. Second, the use of "meme culture" essentially involves partially ceding the encoding rights of brand symbols to users, facilitating a "symbolic equal exchange" between the brand and users—users gain expressive enjoyment, while the brand gains cultural penetration. In terms of evaluation, the effectiveness criterion for Luckin's content strategy lies in whether the content possesses "participability" and "adaptability." Data showing its 80% contribution to total interaction volume demonstrates that the strategy has successfully transformed the brand from an "information publisher" into a "cultural agenda initiator." However, the potential risk is that over-reliance on "meme-playing" may dilute the brand's core "professional coffee" image, requiring clear brand values as a boundary constraint.

3.2. Strategy Two: Interactive Strategy — Building an Equal Dialogue "Friendship" Relationship

Empirical description: High-density comment section interaction is a prominent feature of Luckin's Douyin (TikTok) operations (Li, 2024; Zhao, 2024). Official accounts actively respond to user comments and even "flip cards" for fans, forming a unique comment section culture (Li, 2024; Zhao, 2024). Such interaction transforms the brand from an institutionalized abstract entity into a "personality" with warmth, emotions, and meme skills, significantly narrowing the psychological distance with the audience (Zhao, 2024; Gao, 2025). When the collaboration with "Black Myth: Wukong" sparked criticism, the humanized responses in the comment section to some extent alleviated user dissatisfaction (Wang, 2024). From the perspective of the AIVSA model, consumers as spiritual individuals exhibit socialized behaviors on short video platforms,

and brand owners need to actively create opportunities for encounters and interactive exchanges with consumers (Zhu & Liu, 2024; Zhao, 2024).

Launching challenges and co-creating with users is the core approach for Luckin to achieve viral spread (Zhu & Liu, 2024; Zhao, 2024). In 2024, leveraging the popularity of "The Rose Story," Luckin initiated the "Rose Story of the Early Eighters" challenge on Douyin (TikTok). Six million-follower influencers participated in the nationwide task to generate buzz, with cumulative submissions reaching over 41,000 and topic views exceeding 380 million (Wang, 2024). This UGC approach embeds brand messaging into user-generated content, achieving "participatory communication" (Zhu & Liu, 2024). According to the AIVSA model, consumers develop value recognition through their interpretation and sharing of brand information, fostering viral spread and further expanding brand influence (Zhu & Liu, 2024; Huang, 2024).

In influencer/KOL partnerships, Luckin Coffee implemented a precision stratification strategy (Gao, 2025). The collaboration with "Pragmatic Uncle" Wan Ningshu leveraged his "Money-Saving Uncle persona" to reinforce Luckin's value-for-money image, with a single live stream generating sales exceeding tens of millions (Wang, 2024). In August 2025, Luckin partnered with Wan Ningshu's live streaming campaign, achieving remarkable sales of over 10 million yuan through a 99.9-yuan ten-cup coffee card promotion (Wang, 2024). Within influencer marketing, Wan Ningshu perfectly aligned with Luckin's "Money-Saving Uncle persona" that embodies its cost-effective brand image, serving as a trusted endorsement vehicle (Gao, 2025). Collaborating with influencers from diverse communities for product reviews and narrative integration helped the brand reach multi-tiered audiences (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025).

Theoretical analysis and evaluation: Luckin's interactive strategy exemplifies the practical application of the two-way symmetrical model in the short video era. Unlike traditional PR where symmetrical communication is reserved for crisis periods, Luckin institutionalizes daily equal dialogue as a routine operational practice. The effectiveness criterion here is interaction density and reciprocity rate. High-density comment replies and challenge co-creation transform the brand-user relationship from one-way transmission to two-way construction. The theoretical contribution lies in demonstrating that symmetrical communication, when embedded in daily interactions, can generate "relationship rents" — emotional bonds that buffer negative events (as partially evidenced in the Black Myth incident). However, the risk is that as Douyin's social nature gradually diminishes (users increasingly prefer liking over deep commenting), maintaining interaction depth may require ever-increasing investment.

3.3. Strategy Three: Sales Integration Strategy — Achieving a Closed Loop of "Brand-Efficacy-Sales"

Empirical description: The normalization of live streaming has made Douyin (TikTok) an important communication window for Luckin Coffee (Liu, 2025; Zhou, 2025). Daily live streams not only sell products but also provide brand explanations and new product previews, transforming sales behavior into brand communication (Liu, 2025). During the collaboration with Duolingo, Luckin Coffee's group-buying live streams adopted a "learning" style, with multiple language-learning streamers initiating group purchases and product promotions. The brand's

signature beverage names were integrated with Duolingo learning cards as the live stream background, achieving a unity of content creativity and sales conversion (Wang, 2024). This live streaming format upgraded "interaction," adding IP-to-IP engagement to the audience-brand interaction, making the collaboration more "lively" (Wang, 2024; Liu, 2025).

The secondary card strategy serves as a crucial tool for Luckin Coffee to transition from "product attraction" to "sustained consumption" (Xu, 2024). In August 2025, the company launched a 99.9 yuan ten-cup coffee card, which achieved over 10 million yuan in single-session sales during a live-streaming event co-hosted with Uncle Wanning (Wang, 2024). These cards transform consumers' "stockpiling enthusiasm" into "in-store visits," leveraging one online purchase to drive multiple offline experiences, thereby converting traffic into retention (Xu, 2024). Leading brands employ tiered cards to boost frequent store visits, redemption cards to address consumption fatigue, and influencer cards to streamline decision-making processes, prompting customers to willingly "pre-store 10 cups of milk tea on their phones" (Xu, 2024). More than just promotional tools, secondary cards essentially function as "repurchase engines" for retail outlets (Xu, 2024).

The deep integration of coupons with content is also an effective means to drive conversions (Liu, 2025; Zhou, 2025). Luckin Coffee packages promotional activities as gameplay elements such as "codes" and "unlocking" to enhance interactive engagement and increase conversion intent (Li, 2024). In September 2023, the co-branded product "Jiangxiang Latte" by Luckin Coffee and Moutai performed exceptionally well on the Douyin (TikTok) platform: sales from the launch livestream exceeded 10 million yuan within 4 hours, with cumulative orders for the new product surpassing 1 million cups within the first 15 hours (Wang, 2024).

Theoretical analysis and evaluation: This strategy challenges the traditional separation between PR (long-term relationship management) and sales (short-term transactions). Luckin's approach operationalizes the integration of integrated marketing communications (IMC) in the short video era, where the same live stream simultaneously builds brand image, demonstrates product value, and completes transactions. The effectiveness criterion is conversion continuity — whether communication traffic can be converted into repeat purchases (secondary cards) and whether sales scenarios can simultaneously fulfill communication functions (themed live streams). The theoretical implication is that in the short video environment, the "black box" between communication and consumption has been opened; PR effectiveness can be partially measured by sales velocity, while sales scenarios become PR touchpoints. However, risks include over-commercialization leading to user fatigue and the potential erosion of brand authenticity when every interaction carries a sales motive.

3.4. Strategy Four: Crisis/Hotspot Response Strategy — Rapid, Flexible, and Humanized

Empirical description: In terms of leveraging trending topics, Luckin Coffee demonstrated rapid response capabilities (Li, 2024; Sun, 2025). During the summer of 2024, Luckin keenly captured the popularity of the TV series "Rose Story" and swiftly organized Douyin (TikTok) KOLs to launch a challenge competition, transforming the enthusiasm for binge-watching into the hot sales of "Yellow Rose Latte" (Wang, 2024). This ability to capitalize on trending topics has

kept the brand consistently at the center of public discourse (Li, 2024). From the perspective of short video dissemination patterns, while accelerated dissemination enhances PR efficiency, it also subjects crisis response to unprecedented pressure—crises erupt more suddenly, public sentiment evolves more predictably, and the response window is severely compressed (Da, 2025; Zheng, 2025).

The resolution of potential crises is a particularly noteworthy aspect of Luckin's public relations strategy (Sun, 2025; Zheng, 2025). In August 2024, the joint campaign between Luckin and "Black Myth: Wukong" encountered issues such as unredeemable product coupons and instant sell-out of merchandise, prompting consumer complaints of being "treated like monkeys" (Wang, 2024). Luckin's response can be divided into three levels: first, a prompt response on the official Weibo account stating that the system issue had been resolved; second, hosts explaining in Douyin (TikTok) live streams the limited availability of merchandise and advising customers to switch stores or return items; third, another apology statement issued at noon, clarifying that the high-quality merchandise required a 15-day restocking cycle and promising immediate notification upon arrival (Wang, 2024; Sun, 2025). This swift, transparent, and humanized response helped alleviate user dissatisfaction to some extent (Sun, 2025; Zheng, 2025).

However, in this incident, the remarks made by the CGO (Chief Growth Officer) in his WeChat Moments about "men's purchasing power subverting perceptions" sparked discontent among some female users, exposing the issue of inconsistent internal messaging during crisis communication (Wang, 2024; Zheng, 2025). This case also demonstrates the value of rapid response and the importance of internal coordination (Sun, 2025; Zheng, 2025). According to the Data Index Report, Luckin Coffee faced accusations of "big data price discrimination" and "false delivery" incidents in the past six months, leading to significant fluctuations in net sentiment (Zhao, 2024; Zheng, 2025). These cases indicate that on the Douyin (TikTok) platform, any minor issue can be rapidly amplified, with algorithmic preferences favoring emotionally charged content, compounded by user-generated content, potentially resulting in a "cliff-like" deterioration of public opinion (Wu, 2025; Zheng, 2025).

Theoretical analysis and evaluation: Luckin's crisis response strategy reflects an adaptation to the compressed time frame of short video platforms. The three-tiered response mechanism (official statement → live stream explanation → detailed apology) demonstrates an understanding of platform-specific communication logics: different messages are suited to different formats (text for official records, live video for humanized engagement). The effectiveness criterion is response velocity + message consistency. The Black Myth incident revealed a critical lesson: rapid response is necessary but insufficient without internal alignment. The CGO's off-platform remarks caused disproportionate damage, indicating that in the short video era, every employee utterance is potentially public. The theoretical implication is that crisis communication theory must expand from "organizational-to-public" messaging to "internal coordination as crisis prevention"—a finding that enriches situational crisis communication theory (SCCT) with an internal communication dimension.

4. Effect Evaluation and Potential Challenges

4.1. Strategy Effectiveness Evaluation

In terms of brand image, Luckin Coffee has successfully cultivated a youthful, fashionable, and digitally savvy brand identity (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025). Through continuous collaborations, meme campaigns, and interactive initiatives, the company has earned a reputation among young demographics as "a savvy player" and "a true understanding of youth culture" (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025). The overlapping and complementary demographics between the partner brands in the Duolingo collaboration (aged 24-30) demonstrate Luckin's strong penetration capability within younger demographics (Wang, 2024; Gao, 2025). According to Feigua Pince data, the joint campaign achieved over 30 million impressions within three days of launch, with the co-branded beverage reaching 18.964 million impressions on its debut day (July 6) (Wang, 2024). The A1 audience exposure volume reached 33.391 million impressions, with a conversion rate of 4.02% across audience segments ranging from superficially engaged A2 to deeply interactive A3 groups (Wang, 2024; Huang, 2024).

At the user relationship level, Luckin Coffee has established a highly interactive and engaged user community (Wu, 2025; Zhao, 2024). The Douyin (TikTok) platform contributes 80% of Luckin's total interaction volume (Wu, 2025), with behaviors such as comment section interactions, UGC creation, and challenge participation transforming the brand-user relationship from a one-way transmission-reception dynamic to a two-way interactive relationship (Zhao, 2024). From the perspective of the AIVSA model, consumer interactions in virtual brand scenarios help form a brand culture aligned with the brand's core values, enhance consumers' sense of brand value identification, and improve their brand loyalty (Zhu & Liu, 2024; Huang, 2024).

In terms of market performance, Douyin (TikTok) strategies have a direct promoting effect on new product launches and sales growth (Liu, 2025; Xu, 2024). The "Rose Story of Eight O'Clock Morning People" challenge brought Luckin Coffee over 50 million new 5A customers and 60,000+ new A4A5 purchasing customers (Wang, 2024). The livestream sales for the first launch of Jiangxiang Latte exceeded 10 million yuan within four hours (Wang, 2024). The secondary card strategy converted live-streaming popularity into sustained in-store customer traffic (Xu, 2024). During the reporting period, Luckin Coffee maintained high visibility and interaction levels on the Douyin (TikTok) platform (Wu, 2025; Zhao, 2024).

4.2. Potential Challenges and Risks

The persistent reliance on "internet sensibility" is the primary challenge faced by Luckin Coffee (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025). Douyin (TikTok) content updates rapidly, making users' attention easily shift. Once content innovation weakens and "gags" lose their novelty, users may quickly disengage (Li, 2024). Brands need to continuously maintain content creativity, which places extremely high demands on team capabilities (Gao, 2025). From the perspective of Douyin's social attributes evolution, studies indicate that Douyin's social nature is gradually diminishing, with people becoming accustomed to merely liking and sharing content while showing less

willingness for deeper expression and interaction (Wu, 2025). This trend may impact the depth of brand-user engagement (Wu, 2025; Zhao, 2024).

The risks of excessive entertainmentization and brand dilution warrant vigilance (Wang, 2024; Xu, 2024). Frequent collaborations, meme manipulation, and entertainment-driven content may amplify popularity while obscuring a brand's core identity (Xu, 2024). Striking a balance between meme-driven strategies and preserving the professional coffee brand image remains a persistent challenge for Luckin Coffee (Li, 2024; Xu, 2024). The controversy surrounding CGO's remarks in the "Black Myth: Wukong" collaboration incident partially highlights the risk of brands neglecting user experiences in pursuit of viral appeal (Wang, 2024; Zheng, 2025). From the perspective of core brand values, Luckin Coffee's commitment to "quality supremacy, continuous innovation, and customer-centricity" necessitates maintaining equilibrium between entertainment elements and professional image positioning (Li, 2024; Gao, 2025).

The amplification effect of negative public opinion is an inherent risk of short video platforms (Wu, 2025; Zheng, 2025). The Data Index Report shows that Luckin Coffee faced allegations of "big data price discrimination" and "false delivery" incidents during the reporting period, leading to significant fluctuations in net sentiment (Zhao, 2024; Zheng, 2025). On the Douyin (TikTok) platform, any minor issue can be rapidly magnified. Algorithmic preferences for emotionally charged content, combined with user-generated secondary creations and parody edits, often exacerbate the situation, resulting in a "cliff-like" deterioration of public opinion (Wu, 2025; Zheng, 2025). This places higher demands on brands' public opinion monitoring and crisis response capabilities (Sun, 2025; Zheng, 2025). In the short term, negative events impact brand sentiment; in the long term, neglect of operational details may undermine consumer trust, the cornerstone of brand loyalty (Zheng, 2025; Xu, 2024).

5. Conclusion and Implications

5.1. Research Conclusions

This study finds that the core of Luckin Coffee's public relations strategy on the Douyin (TikTok) platform can be summarized as "user-centered content co-creation" and "deep integration of brand, performance, and sales operations." Through its content strategy, Luckin constructed a brand personality characterized as "playful and daring." Through its interactive strategy, it fostered egalitarian "friendship" relationships with users. Through its sales integration strategy, it achieved a closed loop from communication to conversion. Through its crisis and hotspot response strategy, it demonstrated a rapid, flexible, and humanized image. These four interconnected strategies mutually reinforce each other, collectively shaping Luckin's brand image as youthful, highly interactive, and adept at meme culture.

The essence of this strategy lies in proactively adapting to public relations transformations in the short-video era. Short videos have not only revolutionized information dissemination channels and pathways but also driven profound adjustments in public relations concepts, methodologies, and value orientations: shifting from text-based formats like press releases and soft articles to immersive experiences composed of visuals, music, rhythm, and special effects; transitioning

from "one-way communication" to "interactive engagement"; and evolving from information dissemination to relationship management. Luckin Coffee's practices demonstrate that public relations in the short-video era has shifted from "information dissemination" to "relationship management" and from "traffic chasing" to "reputation cultivation."

5.2. Theoretical Contributions and Practical Implications

Theoretical contributions: This study does not simply apply existing theories but rather extends and integrates the boundaries of the two-way symmetrical model and the AIVSA model within short video platforms. The findings reveal that on the Douyin (TikTok) platform, the "egalitarian dialogue" between organizations and the public is no longer confined to crisis communication but has become internalized as routine operations such as comment section interactions and challenge co-creation, representing a shift from "strategic dialogue" to "ecological relationship management." Furthermore, this study empirically enriches the AIVSA model: Luckin's case shows that "value identification" not only stems from content appeal but also deeply depends on a sense of ritual created through frequent, egalitarian interactions; "value co-creation" is directly manifested in user-generated content, secondary creations of meme culture, and even active discussions about brand pricing strategies. These findings provide new empirical material for understanding the brand-consumer value co-creation mechanism. The study also extends situational crisis communication theory by highlighting internal coordination as a crisis prevention dimension.

Practical implications: In the short video era, public relations must adopt a more proactive, egalitarian, and integrated approach. Proactivity means swiftly identifying trending topics and promptly addressing user concerns; egalitarianism requires abandoning institutional posturing to engage with audiences as "individual entities"; integration entails breaking down barriers between PR and marketing, considering synergy between communication strategies and conversion goals during content planning stages. Specifically, brands can focus on three key strategies: First, building a differentiated platform content matrix with tailored layouts based on platform characteristics; second, deeply integrating product innovation with content dissemination through frequent collaborations and trending topic generation to maintain brand relevance; third, establishing rapid crisis response mechanisms with internal coordination protocols to seize initiative in minute-level communication rhythms.

Limitations and future research: Future research could conduct comparative analyses with other brands (such as Starbucks and Heytea) on the Douyin (TikTok) platform to explore strategic differences under varying brand tones. Longitudinal tracking studies could observe the continuous evolution and adjustments of Luckin's strategies, particularly how it seeks a balance between "frequent collaborations" and "brand dilution risks." Additionally, user perspectives could be adopted to conduct in-depth analyses of the psychological mechanisms underlying users' brand interaction behaviors. The transformation of public relations in the short-video era continues, and theoretical research needs to evolve in tandem with practical developments.

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