

Research on Innovative Reading Promotion Service Model Based on Short Video Platforms: A Case Study of Beijing University of Agriculture

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Abstract: In recent years, with the widespread adoption of 4G and 5G networks, the user base of short video platforms has grown rapidly year by year. The short video industry has now matured, and content creation in this field has expanded from early leisure and entertainment to news, science popularization, education, and other areas, meeting the diverse needs of users and bringing in huge traffic. As a new form of information dissemination, short videos have quickly become popular for their intuitive, vivid, and brief content. Various fields are competing in the short video arena, and some reading promotion media have already achieved success. However, university libraries are still lagging in this area. This paper takes Beijing University of Agriculture as a case study to explore the construction of a reading promotion service model based on short video platforms, aiming to provide insights for the reading promotion efforts of university video accounts.

Keywords: Short Video, Reading Promotion, Innovative Service

1. Introduction

As traditional centers of information storage and dissemination, libraries have been under constant pressure and development with the advent and growth of the information age. However, this pressure has also driven libraries to continuously reform. Over the past decade, libraries have experienced constant transformation and innovation in new media services. University libraries, in particular, serve readers who are mainly college students—individuals who are quick to adapt to new trends, technologies, and curiosities. Therefore, library staff have also kept pace with information development trends, using new media to explore new service channels for libraries.

In the "Weibo era," many universities opened official library accounts as a window and channel for library promotion. With the rapid development of "public accounts," libraries joined the trend of creating "official WeChat accounts," once again opening new service doors. These new media service channels have received good responses from faculty and students, with some universities achieving exceptional results and creating brand recognition. However, with the arrival of the 4G and 5G era, another form of new media information dissemination has emerged and rapidly expanded—short video platforms.

Short video platforms, as a new type of content dissemination and social platform, have seen significant growth. According to Quest Mobile's 2022 China Mobile Internet Annual Report, the usage time of short videos has increased from 15.2% to 28.5% since 2019. In the past two years, short videos have consistently been the application type with the highest proportion of user time, maintaining a high growth trend and continuously capturing users' attention. As of December 2022, the average daily usage time exceeded 2.5 hours, with people's online attention span steadily increasing^[1].

On the other hand, as the information age progresses, the way people obtain information is quietly changing. About 20 years ago, most people would first think of going to the library to find study materials. Today, more people, especially the younger generation, think of going online to find information and answers. In recent years, the emergence of short videos has made information presentation more intuitive and vivid compared to traditional text, images, and sound. The amount of information that can be received in the same amount of time is also greater, which has led to the rapid development and widespread attention from all age groups.

Currently, Douyin and Kuaishou applications dominate in terms of traffic and user engagement, with a stable competitive landscape. Many reading promotion video accounts on Douyin and Kuaishou, such as Fan Deng Reading and Zhangyue Reading, have become very successful and distinctive. However, a

search on Douyin and Kuaishou platforms reveals that university library video accounts dedicated to reading promotion are still very immature. As of November 27, 2021, only 52 libraries had opened video accounts on Douyin, 7 on Kuaishou^[2], and approximately 36 on WeChat Video^[3]. Some accounts include reading promotion content in their promotional videos, but only a few have reached a certain scale.

According to QuestMobile's 2023 China Mobile Internet Annual Report, the total number of mobile internet users in China reached 1.227 billion in 2023, maintaining a growth rate of 2% for the year. Industries that have seized the "windfall period" of short videos have achieved significant traffic and success, with related online applications showing sustained, high-speed growth^[4]. Under these circumstances, libraries must also keep up with the times. By leveraging the large traffic of short video platforms, they can shift offline reading promotion efforts online, making the promotion more comprehensive and reaching a broader audience.

2. Practical Research Based on the Library of Beijing University of Agriculture

Starting from the perspective of university libraries as dedicated institutions for reading promotion within schools, this study leverages the construction of disciplines under the "Double First-Class" initiative of the university. It utilizes the advantages of short video content—its intuitiveness, flexible format, and ease of acceptance and understanding by users—to create a professional video account for reading promotion. By aligning with the needs of the university's "Three-Aspect Education" initiative, the goal is to guide students in developing good reading habits, thereby enhancing their professional reading skills, cultural literacy, research skills, and overall personal development.

2.1 Functional Positioning of the Library Video Account

Based on actual staffing and operational considerations, the library has established official video accounts on Douyin and WeChat Video under the persona "Nong Xiaotu" (Little Agricultural Library). This persona not only highlights the agricultural focus of Beijing University of Agriculture but also maintains consistency with the library's WeChat public account, focusing on marketing to create a brand effect. Unlike the public account, which focuses on library information promotion, the video account is dedicated to reading promotion. Its style is defined as simple, lively, and humorous, aiming to spark students' interest in reading through short videos.

2.2 Reading Promotion Practices Based on the Video Account

The library operates its official video accounts by following trends in short videos, including popular background music, video formats, and books, to produce a series of reading promotion videos. These videos cover various dimensions such as "Little Library Recommends Books," "Reading Activity Promotions," and "Library Facilities Introductions," with different videos released periodically. During the operation, the Douyin account released 15 book recommendation videos, 5 reading promotion activity videos, and 17 videos showcasing various reading spaces and library environments. The topics related to Beijing University of Agriculture's library saw significant engagement, including views, likes, and shares on both Douyin and WeChat Video.

The operation of the video account is closely integrated with offline activities. Book recommendation videos often align with various seasons, festivals, and current events, while reading promotion activity videos complement offline activities by serving both as promotional tools and event showcases, thereby mutually enhancing each other. Currently, the account has promoted and summarized activities such as reading aloud events and the World Book Day on April 23, with viewership significantly higher than other types of videos.

2.3 Research on the Reading Promotion Service Model Based on the Video Account

The library started its reading promotion video account from scratch, with limited operational manpower. To quickly promote the video account, the following attempts were made in reading promotion services: first, during the promotion of reading activities, the video account was also promoted, such as asking students to scan QR codes to add the video account during offline promotions, and adding the video account name to the end of public account articles to actively increase followers. Second, short videos were integrated into the existing public account platform to promote the video account and increase its visibility. Third, reading promotion activities were combined online and offline, using videos

to cover the entire activity process, including preview videos before the activity, live videos during the activity, and summary videos after the activity, making the promotion of reading activities more vibrant.

The author conducted a special investigation into the operation of the video account, including random interviews, questionnaire surveys, and discussions, to collect students' opinions and suggestions on the video account's operation and to identify the current effectiveness and issues. Overall, the video account's operation has been beneficial for promoting and carrying out reading promotion work, with the video format being more welcomed by students and achieving the goal of book recommendations. However, there are still issues such as a narrow audience, low video quality, and insufficient video popularity. Based on the survey (241 valid samples), the current situation of reading promotion work through the video account can be summarized as follows:

The style preferences for the video account among university readers are relatively consistent. From the perspective of user identity and video style preference, both undergraduates and graduates, as well as faculty members, believe that simplicity and clarity are most important, alongside being lively and interesting. Faculty members slightly differ, placing higher demands on professionalism and rigor (Figure 1). This conclusion aligns with the survey results, where approximately 81% of respondents preferred videos shorter than one minute, indicating a preference for concise videos that can quickly convey their message and content.

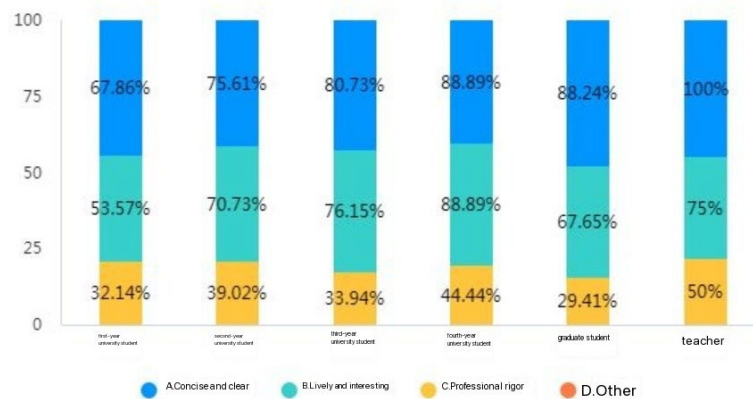


Figure 1: Cross-Analysis of Identity and Video Style Preferences

Resource promotion remains the core task of the library's video account. Survey results from two dimensions—what content users hope the library's video account will publish and what help they expect to receive from the video account—show that the demand for library resources remains the most central. Readers expect to obtain resource-related information from the video account (Figure 2). At the same time, we noticed that over 64% of the respondents believe that the video account increases their interest in reading, indicating that the current content of the library's video account aligns with the expected operational positioning.

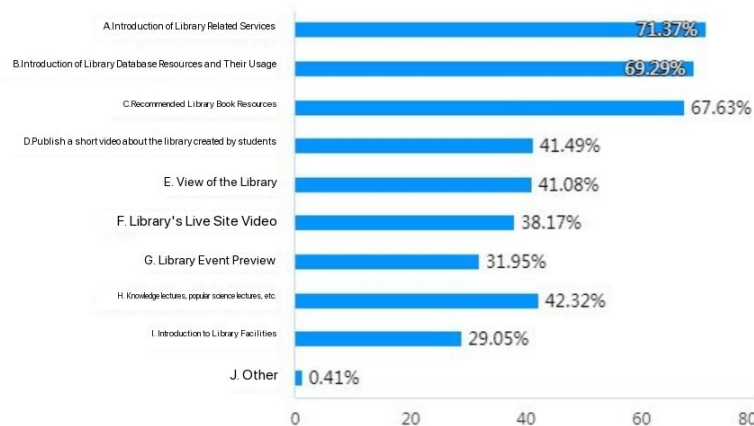


Figure 2: Survey Results on Faculty and Students' Content Needs for the Library Video Account

Cultivating Core Brand Columns. Based on the operation of our library's video account, the "Xiao Tu Recommends Books" and "New Book Announcements" columns have the highest recognition. "Xiao Tu Recommends Books," which has been a reading recommendation brand on new media platforms for five years, operates more smoothly on the video account and easily gains audience attention. We need to focus on cultivating successful brands to create a branding effect, thereby driving attention to other new column formats and establishing a more comprehensive and well-rounded video column system.

3. Insights

As a medium-sized library among university libraries, our library has accumulated some experience and encountered many issues in the practice of reading promotion on video platforms. Here, we summarize our experiences to provide some insights for other operators.

3.1 Establishing a Professional Team is Key to Effective Video Account Operation

Currently, many library video account teams consist mainly of supervising teachers and students, with some part-time contributions from other library staff. There are no dedicated professional operators, which severely limits the quantity and quality of video production. Without professional technical staff, creative ideas cannot be effectively realized, making it difficult to produce high-quality videos and achieve meaningful benefits. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on establishing a more professional operation team for the video account. If possible, hiring professionals to strengthen the team is ideal. If not, recruiting students and teachers with video production expertise as volunteers can help lay a solid foundation for content quality.

3.2 Effective Coordination and Management of Operations

Video account operations require systematic management and coordination. The published videos should be orderly in terms of timing, content, and style. A mature operating model can reflect better stability for the account and help cultivate browsing habits among readers, thereby stabilizing the fan base and promoting further development.

3.3 Marketing Strategies

Like any other video account, library video accounts need necessary and effective marketing. A solid fan base is crucial; without attention, the video output becomes aimless and meaningless. Traditional promotion methods can increase followers but are slow and inefficient. For instance, offline promotion of the video account within the library typically results in an increase of only a few dozen followers per event, which is very slow. Therefore, university libraries must research marketing strategies; a successful marketing campaign can bring significant traffic, rapidly increasing the number of followers and establishing a foundation for video account operation.

3.4 Content is King

The most important aspect of university library video accounts is content, as it determines the value of the account. Firstly, meaningful content can enhance reading promotion efforts, guiding students to read and think deeply, which can positively impact their lives. Without meaningful content, videos will be easily forgotten and fail to promote reading effectively. Secondly, interesting content can capture readers' interest and motivate students to continue watching, fostering a love for reading through enjoyable experiences. Passive viewing will result in videos being easily dismissed. Thirdly, high-quality content ensures the sustainable development of the video account, retaining "marketing" gained followers who become new advocates and promoters. Without this, followers may quickly lose interest, increasing attrition rates and resulting in "inactive followers."

3.5 Enhancing Coordination

While the library manages the video account, it should not operate in isolation from the broader university environment. The library is part of the university, primarily serving its faculty and students. Therefore, the video account should leverage the university's resources to expand its influence and authority. Specifically, the library's video account should actively collaborate with other online media

within the university, forming a united front for promotion and interaction, expanding reach and impact, and achieving a "win-win" situation.

3.6 Long-Term Planning

Opening and operating a library video account has a low threshold in this information age, with the ability to start anytime using a smartphone. However, this low threshold means that to achieve excellence, long-term planning is essential. Focusing not just on the present but having clear positioning and goals is necessary. During operation, continuously monitor and analyze metrics such as viewership, likes, comments, and shares to understand reader preferences, adjust strategies accordingly, and consistently experiment with innovative content and video formats to find the optimal style and solidify popular columns for sustainable, positive operation.

4. Conclusion

In summary, with the development of the information age and the changing ways users obtain information, university libraries should actively follow the trend of new media development. They should fully utilize short video platforms, a new form of information dissemination, to innovate their reading promotion service models and provide readers with more diverse and efficient service experiences. This study offers some insights for university libraries on conducting reading promotion activities on short video platforms. Future research can further explore the application effects and optimization strategies of short video platforms in different types of university libraries.

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