

Research on the Path and Practice of E-Commerce Assisting Rural Revitalization: Taking “Believe in the Land” as an Example

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Abstract: Taking the variety show “Believe in the land” as an example, this paper analyzes the practical paths and challenges of e-commerce in rural revitalization. Through the model of “IP empowerment + omni-channel + consumer cultivation”, the program has achieved emotional drainage of agricultural products and industrial activation, but it also faces problems such as insufficient standardization, high logistics costs, uneven benefit distribution, and talent shortage. In response to these issues, this paper proposes strategies including building a standardized supply chain, optimizing the benefit mechanism, cultivating local talents, and deepening IP collaboration, aiming to promote e-commerce-assisted agriculture to shift from traffic-driven to value-empowering, and provide reference for rural revitalization.

Keywords: E-commerce assisting agriculture; Rural revitalization; “Believe in the land”

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research background

Under the rural revitalization strategy, “digital commerce invigorating agriculture” has promoted the digital transformation of agriculture, and e-commerce has become an important channel for agricultural products to move up the value chain and increase farmers’ income^[1]. In recent years, the “variety show IP + e-commerce” model for assisting agriculture has emerged. “Believe in the land”, through a documentary format, has built a model of “short videos + live broadcasts + offline markets”, providing a new path for rural revitalization^[2]. Agricultural product e-commerce still faces bottlenecks such as difficulty in standardization, weak logistics, uneven benefit distribution, and talent shortage^[3]. Therefore, in-depth research on the “Shi Ge Qin Tian” model of “Believe in the land” is of great significance for promoting the sustainable development of e-commerce-assisted agriculture.

1.2. Research significance

1.2.1. Theoretical significance

Existing studies mostly focus on live broadcast technology or single links, lacking systematic analysis of the cross-border model of “variety show IP + e-commerce”; relevant research on “Believe in the land” also rarely delves into its full e-commerce chain logic^[4,5]. Combining theories such as IP operation and e-commerce 4P, this paper systematically explains the empowerment mechanism of variety show IP, enriches the theory of “IP + e-commerce” for assisting agriculture, and provides a new perspective for rural revitalization and digital integration.

1.2.2. Practical significance

The “Shi Ge Qin Tian” model of “Believe in the land” has formed replicable experiences through IP emotional connection, omni-channel layout, and industrial chain involvement. This paper refines its operational paths and proposes corresponding strategies, providing practical reference for small and medium-sized farmers and local governments^[6].

1.3. Research methods and case overview

1.3.1. Research methods

The case study method focused on the e-commerce model of “Shi Ge Qin Tian” in “Believe in the land”, analyzing links such as IP operation, channel layout, and consumer interaction. Literature research method sorted out relevant literature on e-commerce-assisted agriculture and IP operation to support theoretical analysis and strategy formulation.

1.3.2. Case overview

“Believe in the land” was launched in February 2023, positioned as “real farming”, recording the growth of “Shi Ge Qin Tian” from “farming novices” to new farmers mastering agricultural skills. Based on the program’s IP, the team has derived a variety of e-commerce businesses; and realized two-way empowerment of “e-commerce + cultural tourism” through offline activities.

2. Theoretical basis and literature review

2.1. Core theoretical support

2.1.1. IP operation theory

IP operation constructs core value through symbol and emotional design and realizes commercial extension. Applied to agricultural product e-commerce, it can materialize farming culture, reduce trust costs, and enhance premium.

2.1.2. E-commerce 4P theory

This theory analyzes the operational logic from four dimensions: product, price, place, and promotion. In assisting agriculture, it is necessary to solve problems such as standardization, revenue, channels, and marketing. “Believe in the land” fully practices the 4P theory through technological application, reasonable pricing, multi-channel layout, and scenario-based live broadcasts^[7].

2.1.3. Social-industrial dual network theory

The social-industrial dual network theory holds that e-commerce-assisted agriculture needs to simultaneously construct a “social network” and an “industrial network”: the social network reduces transaction costs through trust relationships, and the industrial network improves operational efficiency through industrial chain collaboration. The interaction between the two can achieve a “1 + 1 > 2” effect^[8]. The “Shi Ge Qin Tian” IP constructs a social network through “supervision live broadcasts” and optimizes the industrial network through full-link involvement, significantly improving the circulation efficiency of agricultural products.

2.2. Literature review

2.2.1. Research status of domestic e-commerce-assisted agriculture

Domestic scholars’ research on e-commerce-assisted agriculture mainly focuses on three directions:

- (1) The impact of live e-commerce technology application on agricultural product sales;
- (2) Supply chain optimization, such as proposing to solve quality control and loss problems through blockchain traceability and cold chain logistics construction^[9];
- (3) Talent cultivation, such as analyzing the ability requirements and training paths of returning young people and village broadcasters.

However, existing studies mostly focus on single links, paying insufficient attention to the cross-border model of “in-depth integration of cultural IP and e-commerce”, especially lacking systematic analysis of the full chain of variety show IP empowering e-commerce-assisted agriculture.

2.2.2. Research progress on “Believe in the land”

Existing research on “Believe in the land” is mainly divided into two categories:

- (1) Communication strategy research, such as analyzing the role of the program’s innovative “slow variety show + documentary” format in rural cultural communication;
- (2) IP value research, such as exploring the driving effect of the “Shi Ge Qin Tian” new farmer IP on young people’s willingness to return to their hometowns. Only a few involve e-commerce practices, and the excavation of the full chain logic of “variety show IP + e-commerce” for assisting agriculture is insufficient.

3. Practical paths of e-commerce assisting rural revitalization in “Believe in the land”

3.1. IP empowerment: Building a dual engine of “emotional connection + brand premium”

IP is the core driving force of e-commerce-assisted agriculture in “Believe in the land”. “Shi Ge Qin Tian” has built an exclusive symbol system with the positioning of “new farmers”, conveying the “spirit of labor” through logos and cultural and creative products, enhancing consumers’ trust and emotional identification^[10]. Through multi-scenario linkage of “main program + supervision live broadcasts + short videos”, efficient traffic conversion is achieved^[11]. Part of the proceeds are invested in public welfare activities such as tree planting and agricultural assistance live broadcasts, and 72% of consumers are more willing to repurchase because of this, strengthening the social recognition of the IP.

3.2. Omni-channel integration: Opening up an “online + offline” circulation closed loop

“Believe in the land” has built an omni-channel network of “online multi-platform + offline scenarios + industrial chain involvement”. Online, it forms a closed loop of “long videos building cognition - short videos promoting

interaction - live broadcasts achieving conversion”. For example, the “wheat flour special session” achieved sales of over 50,000 bags after content warming-up. Offline, it enhances experiences through activities such as farmer’s markets, driving a 60% increase in tourism income. On the industrial chain, the team is involved in the entire process, introducing technology, unifying standards, and connecting channels, reducing the loss rate from 20% to 8% and increasing farmers’ income by 30%.

3.3. Consumer cultivation: Creating a new type of consumer group for agricultural products

“Believe in the land” cultivates a new type of consumer group with rural identity through “cognition improvement + emotional resonance + community operation”, promoting consumption transformation from “one-time purchase” to “long-term repurchase”. The program fills the gap of urban consumers’ farming knowledge with full-process documentary records. This transparent production method has increased consumers’ trust in the quality of agricultural products by 80%. Through the real growth narrative of “Shi Ge Qin Tian”, the program stimulates emotional identification, recording the members’ transformation from agricultural novices to skilled farmers, and showing real scenes such as packaging and purchasing agricultural products in the early morning. As a result, 85% of consumers Believe that “purchasing behavior is support for labor value” rather than just commodity transactions. A fan community named “Hehuo People” has been established to enhance user stickiness through personalized services, such as launching agricultural products with exclusive numbers (rose gift boxes printed with consumers’ exclusive numbers). The community repurchase rate reaches 40%, far exceeding the industry average of 15%, and 70% of members will take the initiative to recommend “Shi Ge Qin Tian” products.

4. Practical dilemmas of e-commerce-assisted agriculture in “believe in the land”

4.1. Insufficient standardization of agricultural products and prominent quality control risks

The non-standard attributes of agricultural products conflict sharply with e-commerce quality control. Fresh products have inconsistent specifications, which are prone to consumer disappointment; insufficient standards in the processing link (such as the “rose curd foreign matter” incident) and the lack of a full-chain traceability system (such as polarized evaluations of Qinghai turnips) affect brand trust.

4.2. High logistics costs and restricted delivery in remote areas

Weak rural cold chain infrastructure and insufficient logistics coverage in remote areas lead to high logistics costs and large losses. Fresh agricultural products have high requirements for cold chains, and the cost of high-end cold chains accounts for 50% of the product price, squeezing farmers’ profits. In addition, the coverage rate of logistics stations in remote agricultural assistance areas is low, and agricultural products need to be transferred through multiple links of “township - county - prefecture-level city”, resulting in poor timeliness and high costs. As a result, some consumers abandon purchases due to “slow logistics”.

4.3. Unbalanced benefit distribution and weak bargaining power of farmers

E-commerce platform fees and industrial chain costs have compressed farmers’ profits. On one hand, platform commissions and packaging and logistics costs account for a high proportion, leading to a 8–12% reduction in farmers’ net profits compared with offline. On the other hand, small and medium-sized farmers lack scale advantages, making it difficult for them to participate in profit sharing, unable to share the additional benefits brought by IP premium, and still in a weak position in the industrial chain.

4.4. Shortage of e-commerce talents and insufficient operational capabilities

The situation that rural local talents “understand agriculture but not e-commerce” and the dependence on external teams restrict the sustainability of the e-commerce model. Local talents in Houdoumen Village and surrounding counties mostly have agricultural planting experience but lack e-commerce operational capabilities, making it difficult for them to proficiently use live broadcast scripts and data analysis tools. For example, when local farmers try to conduct live broadcasts independently, due to “not knowing how to design scripts” and “not understanding traffic investment”, the number of viewers in the live broadcast room is only dozens, with a conversion rate of less than 1%. The e-commerce business of “Shi Ge Qin Tian” relies on external teams, but most farmers lack IP operation and supply chain management capabilities, making it difficult to replicate the “Shi Ge Qin Tian” model in surrounding villages.

5. Optimization paths of e-commerce assisting rural revitalization

5.1. Build a standardized supply chain and consolidate the foundation of quality control

Quality control and logistics efficiency can be enhanced through the advancement of “production-end digitalization combined with government-enterprise collaboration in cold-chain development.” At the production end, the application of drone-based inspections and blockchain traceability should be promoted, a standardized processing system should be established, and full-process traceability should be realized. At the logistics end, county-level distributed cold-chain networks should be developed, and cooperation with enterprises such as SF Express and JD.com should be strengthened to open up the complete chain of “origin pre-cooling–trunk-line cold chain-terminal distribution,” thereby reducing losses and lowering overall costs.

5.2. Innovate the benefit distribution mechanism and safeguard farmers’ rights and interests

Farmers’ bargaining power can be strengthened through the combined approach of “IP development + cooperative organization” supported by policy subsidies. By establishing cooperatives, farmers can be more effectively integrated into the industrial chain, with mechanisms such as “minimum guaranteed purchase plus profit sharing” implemented. For example, allocating 60% of profits to farmers, which has led to a 25% increase in farmers’ net profits after pilot implementation. At the same time, platform-based commission reductions should be promoted, such as lowering Taobao’s commission rate to 12%, while government funds can be established to provide logistics and packaging subsidies for qualified farmers.

5.3. Cultivate localized e-commerce talents and strengthen capacity support

Operational capabilities can be enhanced through the “university-local cooperation plus rural innovation special commissioner” mechanism. By cooperating with universities and enterprises, targeted e-commerce training can be carried out, covering areas such as live-streaming skills, packaging design, and supply chain management. In addition, e-commerce professionals and returning young people can be selected to serve as “rural innovation special commissioners,” providing on-site guidance to farmers in live-streaming operations and data analysis, thereby increasing conversion rates to 8%.

5.4. Deepen IP and e-commerce collaboration and expand the boundaries of value

The extension of IP value and the realization of long-term development can be achieved through the integrated

model of “regional IP co-branding plus e-commerce and cultural tourism.” In terms of regional IP co-branding, the “Shi Ge Qin Tian” IP can be combined with local geographical indication products to develop exclusive co-branded offerings. With respect to the integration of e-commerce and cultural tourism, the variety show IP can be leveraged to build the “Houdoumen Farming Planet” agriculture - culture - tourism project. “Farming experience vouchers” (such as sowing experiences) as well as “agricultural product gift boxes combined with travel packages” can be pre-sold through e-commerce platforms, enabling tourists to participate directly in farming activities while purchasing fresh agricultural products. During the three-month trial operation, the project generated tourism revenue exceeding 2 million Chinese yuan ^[12]. At the same time, drawing on the theory of cultural IP empowerment in rural industrial integration, IP value can be embedded across multiple fields, including rural cultural tourism and agricultural product processing, thereby forming a closed loop of “IP - industry - consumption” ^[13,14].

6. Conclusion and outlook

6.1. Research conclusion

Through “IP empowerment + omni-channel integration + consumer cultivation”, “Believe in the land” has built a new e-commerce-assisted agriculture model of “emotional drainage - trust conversion - industrial activation”, providing a “culture + economy” dual-drive sample for rural revitalization; it still faces four major dilemmas: product standardization, logistics costs, benefit distribution, and professional talents. It is necessary to promote the model to transform to “value empowerment” by building a traceable cold chain system, innovating the benefit distribution mechanism, cultivating local talents, and deepening IP collaboration.

6.2. Future outlook

In the future, it can be deepened from two aspects: technological empowerment and model replication: introduce AI product selection and intelligent customer service to improve efficiency; replicate successful models to the central and western regions, adjusting IP and supply chain strategies in combination with regional culture to promote balanced development. In addition, we can learn from the IP operation experience of Li Ziqi and other IPs, dig deep into the connotation of rural culture, and enhance the cultural added value and sustainability of IP ^[15].

This paper still has shortcomings:

- (1) Most of the data comes from public reports and existing literature, lacking first-hand research data from farmers and consumers;
- (2) The case focuses on the derivative model of variety show IP, not covering cases of independent e-commerce by pure farmers.

Future research can further improve the e-commerce-assisted agriculture theory system through field investigations and expanding the scope of cases. At the same time, as a documentary program, the social value of its e-commerce model needs to be further verified in combination with industry seminar results ^[16].

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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