

The Rise of Time Fengjun Entertainment

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Abstract: The profit generated by Time Fengjun Entertainment through the fandom culture is immeasurable. A retrospective view at the development of Chinese idol industry has shed light on the extensive achievement and revolution made in the past few year. Based on the system of Japanese pop culture (J-Pop) and Korean pop culture (K-pop), Chinese idol industry gradually forms a special scale, and also conceives its own way of identifying and nurturing idols. Time Fengjun Entertainment is the only company which focuses on the development and training of teenagers who have the potential of becoming idols. In this article, the factors underlying the rise of Time Fengjun Entertainment and the possible strategies it took are analyzed.

Keywords: Time Fengjun Entertainment; Fandom; Marketing strategy; Development

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1. Introduction

Beijing Time Fengjun Culture and Art Development Co., Ltd. (Time Fengjun Entertainment) was established in 2009. It is a professional cultural and entertainment communication organization that offers large-scale theatrical performances, entertainer training, and entertainer brokerage. It is also the first to adopt the training of model. Domestic brokerage and entertainment company are guided or coached by celebrities^[1]. Judging from its achievement and prospects, it is possible that Time Fengjun Entertainment can be one of the dominant companies in the media industry.

2. Development and characteristics of Time Fengjun Entertainment

2.1. Comprehensive system of training and administration

In terms of operating the TF family's own structure, Times Fengjun Entertainment is divided into two main bodies, namely the training department and the entertainer operating department, which operate independently and complement each other. Time Fengjun Entertainment will consider the shortlisted contestants as the trainees from every selection in contests. After being selected as trainees, the trainees will be given training in dancing, singing, hosting and other skills required on the stage for free. At the same time, they can still have the opportunities to perform as back-dancers for the debut shows of the entertainers or budding celebrities, who have just been promoted by the company. All these trainees must be assessed by the professional teachers periodically and they will be eliminated while training if not able to fulfill the expectations. When the trainees are well-trained, Time Fengjun Entertainment will publicize their name on the website and they can also participate in the film making, variety shows, etc. made by the company. The budding celebrities will be given the chances to perform, and those who are able to attract attention of the public will finally be given the opportunity to debut. After debut, the entertainer operating department will play a more important role in arranging variety shows and finding endorsement held by well-known TV stations and brands, respectively, to all the budding celebrities to increase their public

exposure. Since the trainees do not have to pay for the training fees, more teenagers have been attracted to participate in the selection contests organized by Time Fengjun Entertainment.

Youthfulness is one of the noticeable features of the entertainers represented by Time Fengjun Entertainment. Time Fengjun Entertainment will send their entertainers to some important national performance like CCTV New Year's Gala, and other shows held by CCTV. A chance to get onto these prestigious stages will get them recognized by more people and they can also be an effective role model for all the teenagers in China. The young fans will improve themselves so that they can resemble their idols as much as possible ^[2].

2.2. The bonus and banes of adopting this pattern

Comparing to the idolization approach of other entertainments, the fans developed in this form of entertainment are more consolidated and more than happy to invest money on the trainees. Other companies in this idol industry like SM Entertainment or Yuehua Entertainment will not give such opportunities to their trainees to have such exposure. Normally, they will only publicize the names of few trainees who have enough capability of debut. Under the operation pattern of Time Fengjun Entertainment, the resources from the former group will incline to their junior fellows, garnering the attention not only from the original fans but also from the public. However, fans developed in this way will have many disadvantages as well. The fans will gradually become cognitive dissonant, meaning they will regard themselves as the most intimate person of their idol and do some things beyond the boundary. Threatening, stalking, illegal filming, being harassed by the radical fans, etc. have gradually become a part of the entertainers' lives. Additionally, they will feel that the entertainers they loved deserve better resources and more exposure. This will lead to endless quarrel online and produce side-effects.

3. The business pattern of Time Fengjun Entertainment

3.1. The formation of the fandom in Time Fengjun Entertainment

At the beginning, with the help of internet, Time Fengjun Entertainment quickly cultivate the fans for the newly exposed trainees and continually post the videos of the trainees to form the core fans circle. These fans are "views generators" of those videos and can one way or another, popularize those trainees. Under the cooperation between the company and the core fans circle, the fans margin will be expanded by the fan-made videos or the variety shows that showcase the trainees ^[3]. In this way, the trainees will gradually become popular, thereby accelerating their debut. The participation can ensure the accumulation of the trainees popularity during the pro-phase of their career life. Through frequent iteration of the fandom and the favor of fans, Time Fengjun Entertainment will set the aim for the development of trainees and satisfy the demand and requirement of the market. By posting the daily-life video of trainees, the fans will indirectly popularize the company.

3.2. The connection between fans and the entertainers

The way of connecting with fans mainly divided in 6 ways: stage performance, photo book, daily videos, concerts, album, and fans club. Stage performances are held by Time Fengjun Entertainment; these performances mainly aim to show the stage manners and showcase the trainees and the entertainers. Photo book is the official published book that compile and display the photos of entertainers when they are filming a specific theme. Another potential use of the photo book is to create the opportunity of buying concert tickets. Daily videos record not only the daily life of trainees but also how they practice and improve. Concert or album will be held on or released on pre-selected days, such as the debut day. Fans club membership is one of the marketing methods of Time Fengjun Entertainment. Fans can charge 38 dollars to get the privilege of buying concert tickets and get more materials than other fans. In these ways, Time

Fengjun Entertainment can gain profit and invest in the more advanced training ^[4].

4. Future development of Time Fengjun Entertainment

4.1. Participation in the mainstream variety shows

Presently, the Chinese government imposes stricter management rules towards the variety shows and the entertainers. This indicates that in addition to the gradually increasing competitive relationships between idols, the environment of the entertaining industry is getting more difficult to advance since the government needs to enforce more stringent rules. Therefore, it is important for Time Fengjun Entertainment to let their entertainers to participate in the mainstream variety shows. For example, the documentary that can propagate the traditional culture of China and shows that can pass on positive energy towards the society. This special method will also play a part in promulgating the propaganda in the style that owns strong Chinese elements. This can help with the positioning of the entertainers and keep pace with the current trends. The role model, TFBOYS, the most well-known idol-group developed by Time Fengjun Entertainment can prove the feasibility of this pathway.

4.2. Strengthening public relations and protection to the entertainers

Since the fans groups tend to be made of younger populations, their comments on the mainstream media such as Weibo are not rational enough, producing a radical impression to the society and harmful for the future development of the entertainers. The unique notion “TF family” makes the strong bonds between the entertainers in Time Fengjun Entertainment; therefore, the quarrel between fans will also influence the relationships between the entertainers or trainees and the company. The illegal leaking of entertainers’ personal information has become common a few years after the debut of the first boy group TFBOYS. By hiring reliable security to protect the entertainers, Time Fengjun Entertainment can provide a safer environment for all the teenage idols in the company. It might be useful to chastize the people who leaks the entertainers’ personal information by exposing these actions online or lodging a police report.

4.3. Improving the quality of derivative product

When the sales of derivative products increases rapidly, the supply chain and manufacturing are prone to mistakes, leading to the dissatisfaction of fans and the decrease of sales. Teen In Times, the junior group established by Time Fengjun Entertainment, sold their first physical album and generated 100 million yuan in sales. However, the quality of the album is up to standard for the price the fans paid. If the derivative product’s quality has no improvement, fans will gradually lose their purchasing desire on Time Fengjun Entertainment’s product since the physical album made in South Korea is better. Besides, the fans groups at around 15–25years old constitute the main purchasing power; the people at this age group are mature enough to make purchases for products that are worth the price. Additionally, Time Fengjun Entertainment should also make some efforts in controlling the skyrocketing price of their derivative products. The price of the limited edition album of TNT increased by 200 yuan overnight.

4.4. Adjustment of public persona of the entertainers

Over time, Time Fengjun Entertainment ensures that the entertainers can juggle between the study and work the since this is a characteristic of entertainers in this company. This is especially striking among other competitors due to the positive influence they created and the focus on education in Chinese culture. However, in June, the release of college entry exam results has tarnished the impression of others in this company. The captain of the boys group TNT, Ma Jiaqi, did not get the scores needed for entry into his dream school. Prior to this issue, Ma always got the public attention because of his public persona, which is a student with good grades and quite self-disciplined. This has attracted the attention of the society and

resulted in a bad reputation on the company itself. Thus, Time Fengjun Entertainment have to pay attention to setting entertainers' public persona as well as their studies. Adding tests for the trainers and entertainers and recording this content to post in their daily-life videos can be a good way to report the situation of their studies. Also, Time Fengjun Entertainment have to precisely choose the public persona of the entertainers. Ideally, the public persona of an entertainer should resemble to his/her actual figure in real life, and this can reduce the risks if the entertainer does something that does not match the preset persona.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, in such a competitive entertainment industry, the rise of Time Fengjun Entertainment is not unpredictable. Time Fengjun Entertainment can rely on the correct market positioning, build their own corporate culture, and develop a unique image to increase popularity of the entertainers and trainees and expand fans base.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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