

Library Use of Short-Video Platforms for Reading Promotion: Strategies and Effectiveness Analysis

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Abstract: With the deep penetration of mobile internet, short video platforms represented by Douyin, Kuaishou, and Bilibili have become core channels for the public, especially young people, to access information and engage in cultural consumption. In this context, traditional library reading promotion models face challenges such as narrow coverage, weak interaction, and insufficient attractiveness. Concurrently, although some libraries have begun preliminary explorations into short video practices, widespread issues persist, including fragmented strategies, lack of data-supported effectiveness evaluation, and the absence of a systematic model. This research aims to systematically investigate the strategies and effectiveness of libraries utilizing short video platforms for reading promotion. Employing methods such as literature and case study, questionnaire surveys, user persona analysis, data analysis, and pilot experiments, it conducts a comprehensive and in-depth empirical analysis of the operational status, content strategies, interactive features, user feedback, and promotion effectiveness of short video accounts of academic libraries. The study finds that the current overall coverage of short video accounts among academic libraries is relatively low, with problems including uneven platform development, content homogenization, superficial interaction, and inadequate operational mechanisms. Based on this, the research constructs a comprehensive evaluation system covering four dimensions: communication effect, interactive effect, conversion effect, and brand impact, which is applied and validated through the case of Beijing University of Agriculture Library. Finally, the study proposes a set of full-process optimization strategies and practical guidelines encompassing mechanism building, content innovation, interaction deepening, and data-driven operations. The aim is to provide scientific decision-making basis and actionable plans for short video reading promotion in both academic and public libraries, thereby promoting the digital transformation and efficiency enhancement of library services.

Keywords: Short Video Platforms; Reading Promotion; Academic Libraries; Effectiveness Evaluation; Strategy Optimization

Introduction

The digital, networked, and intelligent information environment has profoundly changed the public's habits of information acquisition and knowledge consumption. Short-video applications represented by Douyin, Kuaishou, and Bilibili (B-station) have rapidly gathered a huge user base centered on Generation Z (digital natives) by virtue of their fragmented, visual, and highly interactive features, and have increasingly become an important arena for the dissemination of pan-knowledge and pan-cultural content. The "short-video + reading" model has emerged as the times require, injecting new vitality into the publishing industry and the field of reading promotion. Driven by the deepening advancement of nationwide reading and the digital transformation of libraries, how to leverage short videos as an emerging medium to break through the temporal, spatial, and formal limitations of traditional reading promotion, reach young users more effectively, promote collection resources, and enhance service efficiency has become a practical issue that the library community urgently needs to explore.

An Hongyu^[1] argues that book short videos are a manifestation of the "Internet + publishing industry"; short videos provide audiences with non-fragmented content in fragmented time, and the big data environment accurately pushes interested video content to tagged groups, so using short videos for book promotion is a successful integration of the publishing industry and the Internet. Li Rui et al.^[2] analyzed the current situation of library short-video reading promotion from the perspective of affordance and proposed optimization strategies; Liu Haiying^[3] reviewed the development status of

short-video services in university libraries; Liao Shuyu^[4] discussed the operation and innovation strategies of Douyin platforms in university libraries; and Zhang Yuhui^[5] conducted a review of relevant research literature. These studies provide useful references for this paper. However, current practice still commonly suffers from problems such as scattered operations, vague strategies, subjective effect evaluations lacking data support, and systematic theoretical research and empirical analysis remain insufficient.

Therefore, this study is grounded in the practical needs of university library service innovation and the promotion of nationwide reading, following the logical sequence of "theoretical review—empirical analysis—strategy construction—effect verification." First, through large-scale surveys, it clarifies the current operational status and core problems of university library short-video accounts. Second, through in-depth case analyses and user surveys, it deconstructs successful content, dissemination, and interaction strategies. Finally, combined with the pilot practice at Beijing University of Agriculture Library, it proposes operational whole-process optimization strategies and guidelines. This study aims to fill the gap in systematic research on library short-video promotion, provide theoretical references and practical guidance for peers, and help libraries reshape their service image and improve service efficiency in the digital era.

1. Analysis of the Current Situation and Problems of Short-Video Reading Promotion in University Libraries

1.1 Data Collection

The data for this study mainly come from two sources:

1.1.1 Macro-level Operational Data

With reference to the ShanghaiRanking University Rankings, we selected 125 universities as the sample frame. Before May 10, 2025, we manually searched for keywords such as "XX University Library" on Douyin, Bilibili, and Kuaishou, and verified and recorded basic data including the activation status of their official accounts, number of videos, and number of followers one by one, so as to analyze the overall current status of the short-video presence of university libraries.

1.1.2 Micro-level User and Effect Data

We distributed electronic questionnaires to faculty and students of Beijing University of Agriculture, collected 356 valid responses, and conducted effect analysis in combination with relevant data from the library's short-video accounts.

1.2 Account Activation and Operational Overview

The survey of 125 sample universities shows that the overall short-video operation of university libraries in China is still in a preliminary stage of development, and exhibits notable imbalances.

1.2.1 The overall coverage rate is relatively low

Only 33 universities have opened certified official library short-video accounts on at least one platform, with an overall activation rate of only 26.40%.

1.2.2 The platform distribution is extremely uneven

Among the three major platforms, Bilibili has the highest activation rate at 17.6%, followed by Douyin at 14.4%, while Kuaishou has an activation rate of only 1.6%, which is almost negligible.

1.2.3 The leading effect of operational scale is significant

On the three platforms of Douyin, Bilibili, and Kuaishou, the total accumulated number of videos is 2,191, of which Douyin and Bilibili contribute more than 95% of the content. The total accumulated number of followers is 95,895, also concentrated on Bilibili and Douyin. A few accounts, such as Zhejiang University Library (on Douyin), Tsinghua University Library (on Douyin and Bilibili), Sichuan University Library (on Bilibili), and Wuhan University Library (on Bilibili), are far ahead in terms of video count and follower numbers, exhibiting a pronounced "head effect," while a large number of accounts remain with few followers and slow updates.

1.3 Analysis of Main Operational Models

Currently, the primary operator of short-video accounts in university libraries is the official library-run model: the library directly operates the account, accounting for about 70% of cases, making it the dominant form; however, it is often constrained by institutional mechanisms, and its content innovation and flexibility need improvement. The other model is the student team or student club operation model: the library entrusts student teams or related clubs with content creation and operation. The content is usually more lively and closer to students' interests, but there may be issues such as insufficient professionalism, weak integration with the library's core business, and operational interruptions caused by high personnel turnover.

1.4 Content Strategy and Interaction Features

1.4.1 Content Strategy

The short-video content of university libraries can be summarized into five core tracks: service tools, collection resources, reading promotion, campus culture/image, and popular science knowledge. The main problems currently existing include:

- a. A single structure and severe homogeneity: the content is mostly concentrated on simple library tours, new book displays, and activity notifications, lacking in-depth planning, with "instrumental" content outweighing "attractive" content.
- b. A lack of user perspective: most content is presented from the library's own perspective rather than from the needs and interests of users (students/faculty), resulting in weak resonance.
- c. Insufficient serialization and IP-building: content releases are mostly sporadic and point-based updates, lacking sustained column-based planning and branded IP development, making it difficult to establish stable user expectations.

1.4.2 Interaction Features

The interactions of current accounts exhibit the characteristics of "shallow interactions being common, moderate interactions being relatively low, and deep interactions being almost absent." Shallow interactions, such as likes and simple emoji comments, account for the vast majority, but user engagement is low. Moderate interactions, such as questions about video content and longer comments, account for a relatively small proportion. Deep interactions, such as participation in initiated challenge activities and offline borrowing or consultation behaviors triggered by video content, are even rarer. In terms of interactive operation mechanisms, there is a widespread "four-lack" phenomenon: a lack of dedicated personnel to reply to comments, a lack of proactive design of interactive elements (such as polls and topic challenges), a lack of linkage design between online activities and offline services, and a lack of feedback optimization mechanisms based on interaction data. This prevents the social attributes of short videos from being fully utilized and breaks the conversion chain.

1.5 Summary of Typical Problems

Based on the above analysis, the current short-video reading promotion of university libraries mainly faces the following four major categories of problems:

1.5.1 In terms of operational models

They are mainly operated on a part-time basis, lacking full-time staff and stable mechanisms; there is a lack of coordinated operation among multi-platform accounts, failing to form a matrix effect.

1.5.2 In terms of content matrix

The content structure is single and homogenization competition is severe; there is a lack of sustained column planning and unique brand IP, making it difficult to cultivate user loyalty.

1.5.3 In terms of interaction and conversion

Interactions remain at a shallow level, failing to effectively guide deep participation and conversion of online-to-offline behaviors; the conversion path from "viewing" to "using" is not smooth.

1.5.4 In terms of data awareness

Evaluation criteria are one-sided, with excessive attention paid to superficial data such as play

counts and like counts, while neglecting deeper indicators such as completion rate, interaction rate, net follower increase, and conversion rate, which better reflect content quality and actual effectiveness.

2. User Survey and Empirical Analysis: A Case Study of Beijing University of Agriculture Library

To gain an in-depth understanding of user needs and the effectiveness of promotion, this study conducted a special user survey using Beijing University of Agriculture Library as a case.

2.1 User Profile Analysis

Based on the analysis of 356 valid questionnaires, the user profile characteristics are as follows:

2.1.1 Identity structure

Undergraduates are the absolute core users, accounting for 78.37% of the total; master's students and doctoral students rank next; and the proportions of faculty members and administrative staff are relatively low. This determines that content creation should be primarily oriented toward the needs of undergraduates.

2.1.2 Platform usage differences

Faculty members tend to prefer WeChat Channels, while undergraduates show a clear preference for Douyin and Bilibili. This suggests that differentiated platform content placement or focus should be adopted according to the media habits of different user groups.

2.1.3 Content preference differences

Different users have different content needs. Master's students pay more attention to research support content such as "database usage tutorials"; faculty members have higher demands for "academic research skills" and "recommendations of new professional books"; and undergraduates show strong interest in content such as "recommendations of new books or good books," "interesting popular science knowledge," and "campus culture displays."

2.2 Platform Usage and Content Preferences

2.2.1 Platform Usage

Douyin is the most frequently used short-video platform among faculty and students (78.37%), followed by REDnote and Bilibili. This is somewhat misaligned with the library's current heavy investment in Bilibili (see Section 2.1), which is worth pondering.

2.2.2 Content Preferences

"Recommendations of new books or good books" became the most popular content type, with a selection rate of 59.55%. It was followed by "database usage tutorials," "library service guides," and "cultural activity promotions." Practicality, interest, and timeliness are the key factors attracting users.

2.2.3 Duration Preferences

57.87% of users consider 15 to 60 seconds to be the most ideal duration for library short videos, which conforms to the characteristics of fragmented short-video consumption. In-depth content of 1 to 3 minutes also has a considerable market (35.96%), and is more suitable for platforms like Bilibili.

2.3 Promotion Effect Analysis

2.3.1 Account Following and Reach

Among the surveyed users, 42.42% had followed the library's official account, but over 35% of users indicated that they had never encountered the relevant account, showing that there is still considerable room for improvement in the breadth of promotion coverage. Algorithm recommendation and the "follow page" were the main channels through which users came across the library's videos.

2.3.2 Behavioral Conversion

Among the behaviors after watching videos, shallow interactions such as "liking, saving, or

sharing" accounted for the highest proportion. A considerable number of users indicated that they would "gain new understanding of library services" or "be stimulated to read," but the proportion of direct conversion to "borrowing books" or "signing up for activities" was relatively low, indicating that the conversion path from cognition to behavior needs to be strengthened through better design.

2.3.3 User Satisfaction

Users' average satisfaction score with library short videos in five aspects—"content practicality," "content interest," "format creativity," "update frequency," and "interaction experience"—was 4.02 (on a 5-point scale), which falls at a "relatively satisfied" level. This indicates that the current work has gained basic recognition from users, but there is still room for improvement in terms of interest, creativity, and interactivity.

2.3.4 Positive Impact

Over 70% of users believed that library short videos increased their understanding of library collections and services; nearly 60% of users indicated that short videos stimulated their reading interest. This confirms the positive role of short videos in enhancing library awareness and promoting reading.

2.4 User Attitudes and Improvement Suggestions

Users' suggestions for improving library short videos are mainly concentrated in the following aspects: first, strengthening promotion and publicity to increase account awareness; second, enriching the content system by adding interest, creativity, and serialized content while maintaining practicality; third, improving the interactive experience by replying to comments in a timely manner and conducting live-stream interactions; fourth, enhancing practicality by providing more information on "essential needs" such as thesis writing, database usage, and postgraduate entrance examinations and civil service exams; and fifth, promoting operational innovation, such as collaborating with well-known teachers and student KOLs to create branded columns.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 Main Conclusions

3.1.1 The channel value has been verified, but the penetration rate and operational level urgently need improvement.

Short videos are undoubtedly an efficient strategic channel for reaching young users and reshaping the library's youthful brand image. However, the current overall activation rate of university libraries is low (26.40%), and most of the accounts that have been activated suffer from problems such as slow updates, low interaction, and content homogenization, so the channel value is far from being fully realized.

3.1.2 "Content is king" and "relationship operation" are the keys to success.

The survey shows that high-quality, practical, and interesting content is the foundation for attracting users. However, attention and views alone are not enough; only through well-designed interactive mechanisms to build deep connections with users can the conversion from "traffic" to "retention" and from "viewing" to "action" be achieved.

3.1.3 Organizational support and team capability are the cornerstones of sustainable development.

Sustainable short-video operation cannot rely on part-time staff or on "driving by passion alone." It requires clear organizational support, a stable content production mechanism, standardized process management, and new media literacy of librarians in content planning, video production, data analysis, and community operation. The shortcomings in mechanisms and talent are currently the core bottlenecks restricting development.

3.2 Countermeasures and Suggestions

Based on the above research conclusions, this study proposes the following systematic optimization suggestions from the perspective of library practice:

3.2.1 Mechanism Construction: Laying the Operational Foundation

a. Establish dedicated positions or teams. Libraries should set up full-time new media operation positions or teams, clarify their responsibilities, rights, and assessment objectives, and ensure the continuity and professionalism of operations.

b. Develop standardized operational processes. Establish a full-process SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) covering "topic selection – script writing – production and filming – review and release – interaction maintenance – data review," and formulate an annual/quarterly content calendar to ensure the planning and stability of content updates.

c. Build cross-departmental coordination mechanisms. Establish linkage mechanisms with internal library departments such as acquisition, technology, and reading services, as well as with the university's publicity department, youth league committee, and student clubs, so as to broaden content sources and realize resource sharing.

3.2.2 Content Innovation: Creating Core Attractiveness

Implement differentiated platform strategies:

a. For Douyin: focus on "short, flat, and fast," concentrating on 15-to-60-second content such as "quick guides to services," "quick views of collection treasures," and "campus cultural moments."

b. For Bilibili: emphasize "medium-length and in-depth" content, developing columns such as "database usage tutorial series," "classic reading guide micro-courses," and "edited academic lecture highlights."

c. For WeChat Channels: integrate with the official WeChat public account to serve existing reader communities, conduct live event broadcasts, and provide in-depth reports.

d. Build branded content IPs. Create fixed columns such as "Librarians Talk About Books," "Unlock Databases in One Minute," and "Library Fun Facts" to form brand memory points and cultivate users' habits of regular viewing.

e. Deepen "visualization of knowledge services" and "storytelling of the library." Transform complex database search skills and information literacy knowledge into vivid animations or situational dramas; explore stories behind librarians, readers, and collections to enhance emotional connections.

3.2.3 Interaction Deepening: Building Active Communities

a. Implement a "comment must be replied" mechanism. Establish a database of frequently asked questions to ensure that user comments receive meaningful replies within 24 hours, creating an atmosphere of being valued.

b. Plan regular online interactions. Hold regular activities such as "live Q&A sessions with the director/subject librarians," "joint reading and check-in challenges," and "topic submissions" to stimulate user participation.

c. Design a closed loop for online-to-offline conversion. Clearly guide users to complete specific actions in the videos, such as "click the lower left corner to register for an event" or "search for the call number XX to borrow," and provide further assistance through comment sections and private messages, so as to open up the path from online interest to offline behavior.

3.3 Research Limitations and Future Prospects

This study primarily focuses on university libraries as its research object, and the applicability of the proposed evaluation system and strategies to scenarios such as public libraries needs further verification. Future research can be deepened in the following directions:

3.3.1 Establish industry benchmark data

This study calls on industry associations or alliances to take the lead in establishing key data benchmarks for library short-video operations, so as to facilitate horizontal benchmarking and self-diagnosis for individual libraries.

3.3.2 Explore the application of AIGC technology

Research should be conducted on the application potential of Artificial Intelligence Generated

Content (AIGC) in areas such as automatic script generation, intelligent editing, virtual librarian broadcasting, and multilingual translation, so as to reduce production costs.

3.3.3 Track long-term impact mechanisms

Longitudinal studies should be carried out to deeply explore the long-term impact mechanisms of short-video reading promotion on readers' information literacy improvement, the cultivation of deep reading habits, and even academic research capabilities.

Fund Projects

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