

# THE SUSTAINABILITY OF DIGITAL MARKETING BASED ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN CONSUMERS-TAKING TIKTOK AMERICAN DISTRICT WIGS AS AN EXAMPLE

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**Abstract:** Under the background of the deep integration of the global digital economy and cross-border e-commerce, the wig market in the U.S. shows unique growth momentum and market complexity with high reliance on digital marketing. As a typical representative of China's wig industry going overseas, the company has relied on TikTok and other platforms to build a digital marketing ecosystem, achieving an average annual revenue growth of 30% in the U.S. market. Based on a three-dimensional model of economy, environment, and society, this paper analyzes wigs in TikTok's live-broadcast marketing, UGC content segmentation, and green brand narratives. It addresses the challenges of cultural adaptation and traffic involvement faced by African-American consumers. The study finds that accurate, data-driven, localized product development, multi-platform, synergistic omni-channel operations, and social responsibility integration are the core path to digital marketing sustainability. The findings provide theoretical guidance for the digital transformation of cross-border e-commerce companies in culturally sensitive markets and validate the practical value of the "Technology Enablement - Value Symbiosis - Ecological Construction" model.

**Keywords:** Wigs; African-American consumers; Digital marketing; Sustainability

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Amid the global surge in digital marketing, the U.S. wig market has grown to become the world's largest consumer market, with a compound annual growth rate of 15%. Black consumers account for over 60% of this core market share, forming a dual consumption driver characterized by "physiological necessity + fashion expression" [1]. As a flagship enterprise from Xuchang—China's wig manufacturing hub—Zhejiang Linghang Network Technology Co., Ltd. (specializing in Caucasian hair products) leverages its integrated industrial-trade supply chain to build a TikTok-centric digital marketing matrix. Its 2023 online revenue in the US market exceeded 800 million yuan. Its brands like Louis Ferre and Aimer consistently rank among the top three in their categories on platforms like Amazon and TikTok. Its TikTok account boasts over 2 million followers, with a live-stream conversion rate of 9.2%, and user-generated content (UGC) accounts for 30% of new customer traffic [2].

A key point for deeper exploration is the inherent cultural mismatch between Linghang Technology's primary product—hair care tailored for Caucasian hair types—and the cultural archetypes of the traditional African-American consumer market. This "product-culture" misalignment forms the core theoretical entry point of this study: how companies can leverage digital marketing strategies to bridge this gap and achieve sustainable growth [3].

However, companies expanding into markets via platforms like TikTok face multiple challenges: the inherent product-cultural mismatch—where the Caucasian hair types they primarily supply differ from the natural hair types traditionally associated with white consumers—requires marketing strategies to reconstruct product value narratives, emphasizing advantages in styling versatility and dye adaptability. Competition for traffic and compliance pressures: TikTok's advertising costs have surged by 25% annually, while the U.S. CCPA imposes stringent requirements on user data collection, including the use of biometric data in skin-tone-matching algorithms [4]. Sustainability Transformation Demands: European and American markets require over 40% adoption of eco-friendly packaging and biodegradable materials, while labor standards, such as ESG ratings for factories (e.g., the Xuchang plant), face rising certification thresholds, compelling companies to restructure supply chain ecosystems [4].

Based on this context, this paper uses Zhejiang Linghang Technology as an empirical case study. Integrating digital marketing theory with sustainability frameworks and incorporating a cultural narrative perspective, it analyzes how enterprises can enhance brand affinity through TikTok content value reconstruction across three dimensions: economic efficiency, environmental responsibility, and social value. This includes emphasizing the styling advantages of white hair, showcasing green technology-enabled processes such as wastewater recycling rates of 60%, and fostering community value co-creation through initiatives like the Hair Loss Patient Public Welfare Program. and charitable initiatives for hair loss patients to boost brand affinity by 35%. This establishes a sustainable marketing system for culturally sensitive markets, offering theoretical and practical insights for cross-border e-commerce enterprises navigating the "growth-compliance-responsibility" equilibrium.

This paper first proposes the "Narrative-Value-Ecology" (NVE) theoretical model, offering a new perspective on understanding digital marketing sustainability in culturally sensitive markets. Second, through an embedded single-case study, it reveals the specific mechanisms by which enterprises resolve "product-culture" misalignment through digital

marketing. Finally, the research conclusions provide valuable reference for cross-border e-commerce enterprises undergoing digital transformation in similar contexts.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Digital Marketing Sustainability Stems from the Integration of Corporate Sustainability Theory and Social Responsibility Marketing Theory

Early studies primarily focused on the economic benefits of digital marketing. As the social environment evolved, scholars began examining its environmental and social impacts [5]. Existing research defines the sustainability of digital marketing across three dimensions: economic, environmental, and social. Economic sustainability emphasizes data-driven precision marketing and ROI optimization. Meng Tao et al. proposed a three-dimensional model of digital marketing capabilities: “Precise Targeting, Interactive Communication, and Channel Integration” [6]. Zhejiang Linghang Technology increased inventory allocation for hairstyles preferred by white consumers to 40% and reduced slow-moving rates to 6.2% by analyzing Amazon AWS data [7]. Environmental Sustainability: Focuses on low-carbon supply chains and green communication. Courtney & Su noted that chemical processing accounts for 35% of carbon emissions in wig production. Companies can enhance their environmental image by using eco-friendly dyes [8], such as Xuchang factory's 60% wastewater recycling rate and ESG reporting [6]. Social Sustainability: Focuses on consumer value resonance and social responsibility. Sabakun Naher Shetu found that Generation Z consumers' sensitivity to brand philanthropic actions increased by 37% [9]. Navigate Technology's “Hair for Charity” initiative, donating 1% of profits per order, boosted the brand's Net Promoter Score (NPS) by 25 percentage points.

### 2.2 Application of Cultural Narrative Theory in Marketing

Cultural narrative theory posits that brands are not merely product providers but also meaning-makers and storytellers [10]. In cross-cultural marketing, constructing narratives that resonate with target audiences transcends physical product limitations to forge emotional connections. This theory offers a crucial perspective for understanding Linghang Technology's marketing practice—specifically, how the company mitigates inherent product-culture differences through “narrative reconstruction.”

### 2.3 Behavioral Characteristics of White Consumers in the U.S. Wig Market

White consumers make up the core customer base of the U.S. wig market and exhibit distinct digital traits in their purchasing decisions. Content Dependency, 92% of consumers source wig information via TikTok and Instagram, with influencer reviews and UGC content surpassing traditional advertising in influence [7]. Dual Functional and Emotional Needs: Hair loss patients' functional requirements, such as breathability and fit, create a distinct market segment from fashion-driven consumers, driving companies to develop differentiated products. Generational Differences, Gen Z consumers prefer real-time purchasing via livestreams, while Millennials rely on brand-owned websites and community operations.

### 2.4 Synergistic Mechanisms Between Cross-Border E-Commerce and Brand Building

Cross-border e-commerce platforms lower channel barriers, becoming the core vehicle for SMEs to expand overseas [11]. Practice validates the effectiveness of the “platform matrix + localized operations” strategy. Multi-platform synergy sees Amazon capturing search traffic, SHEIN collaborations enabling fast-fashion channel penetration, and independent sites cultivating private-domain users with 35% repurchase rates, forming a closed-loop of “public-domain traffic acquisition - private-domain conversion” [4]. Value Reconstruction Strategy. For Caucasian consumers, launching the “Hairstyle Tutorial” video series demonstrates diverse styling techniques for white hair. Limited editions designed around cultural holidays like Kwanzaa boosted product sales by 45% [12].

### 2.5 Theoretical Framework: NVE Model Construction

Based on the above literature review, this paper constructs the “Narrative Reconstruction-Value Symbiosis-Ecological Construction” (NVE) theoretical model. This model posits that in culturally sensitive markets, the key to achieving sustainability through digital marketing lies in: first, resolving inherent differences between products and cultural markets via narrative reconstruction; second, creating shared value through value symbiosis across economic, environmental, and social dimensions; finally, sustaining and maximizing marketing effectiveness through digital ecological construction, see Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Digital Marketing Sustainability Model Architecture Diagram

### 3 ZHEJIANG LINGHANG NETWORK TECHNOLOGY CO., LTD.'S DIGITAL MARKETING PRACTICES FOR WIGS

#### 3.1 Data-Driven Precision Operations

Leveraging the flexible production systems of eight factories in Xuchang and Yiwu, Linghang Technology has established a closed-loop system encompassing “data collection, product development, and supply chain responsiveness.” Demand Insights: By tracking keyword popularity for terms like “hairstyle tutorial” and “wig styling” via Google Trends, the “Styling Series Wigs” launched in 2023 achieved monthly sales exceeding 200,000 units. Smart Supply Chain. Utilizing MES systems enables 7-day prototyping and 15-day mass production, reducing inventory turnover days to 45—30% below the industry average [13]. Data-Driven Closed-Loop Optimization. By continuously monitoring sales data and user feedback, the company established a “data-decision-execution-feedback” closed-loop optimization mechanism, accelerating product iteration speed by 50%, see Table 1.

**Table 1** Supply Chain Effect Ratio Analysis Table

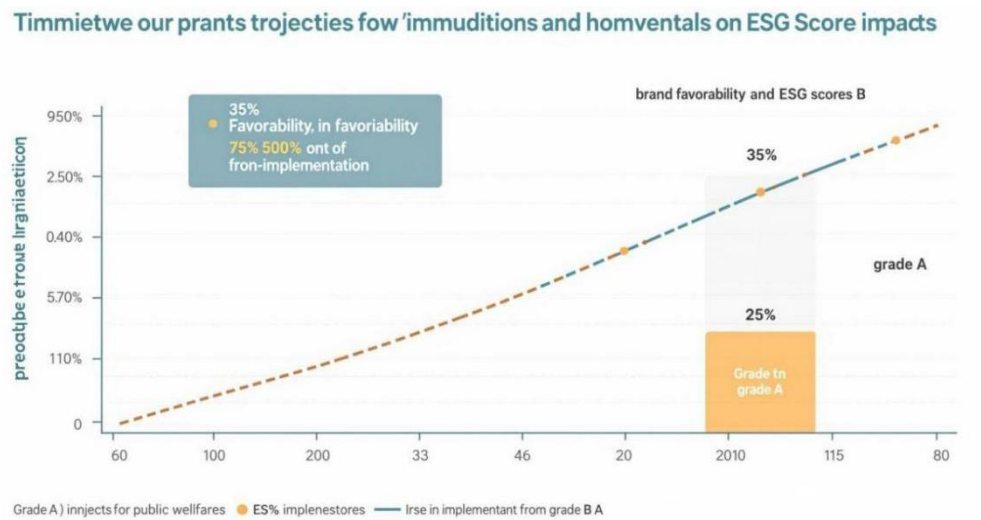
Metric	Linghang Technology	Industry Average
New Product Sample Lead Time	7 days	15 days
Inventory Turnover Days (Days of Inventory on Hand, DIO)	45 days	65 days
Slow-Moving/Obsolete Item Rate	6.2%	18%

#### 3.2 Omnichannel Content Marketing Matrix

Live-Streaming E-commerce: Hosted “Wig Styling Workshop” livestreams on TikTok, where hosts showcased effects using 3D try-on technology. Cumulative views exceeded 12 million in 2023, driving a 68% increase in related product sales [8]. Virtual Influencer Collaboration: Partnered with virtual influencer Lil Miquela to generate personalized AI-powered styling content, reaching Gen Z consumers and boosting brand awareness among this demographic by 40% [4]. Cultural Narrative Reconstruction: Redefined white hair as “the ideal canvas for styling creativity” through content marketing, emphasizing its malleability for coloring and styling. This successfully shifted consumer perception frameworks.

#### 3.3 Sustainability-Driven Brand Building

Green Product Innovation. Launched the “Eco-Hair” line featuring biodegradable packaging and natural hair fibers, certified under Amazon's Climate Pledge Friendly program, achieving a 20% premium pricing increase [6]. Social Responsibility Integration. Partnering with the American Hair Loss Association, the brand launched the “Confidence Wig” public welfare initiative, providing free custom-fitting services to 1,000 hair loss patients. This earned the brand MSCI A-rated ESG certification [7]. See Figure 2 for details. Value Co-creation Mechanism. By establishing a consumer-participatory design platform, the brand invited users to engage in the product design process, thereby creating mutual value for both the brand and consumers [14].



**Figure 2** Impact of Public Welfare Initiatives on Brand Favorability and ESG Scores

## 4 CHALLENGES AND COUNTERMEASURES

### 4.1 Data privacy and Compliance Risks

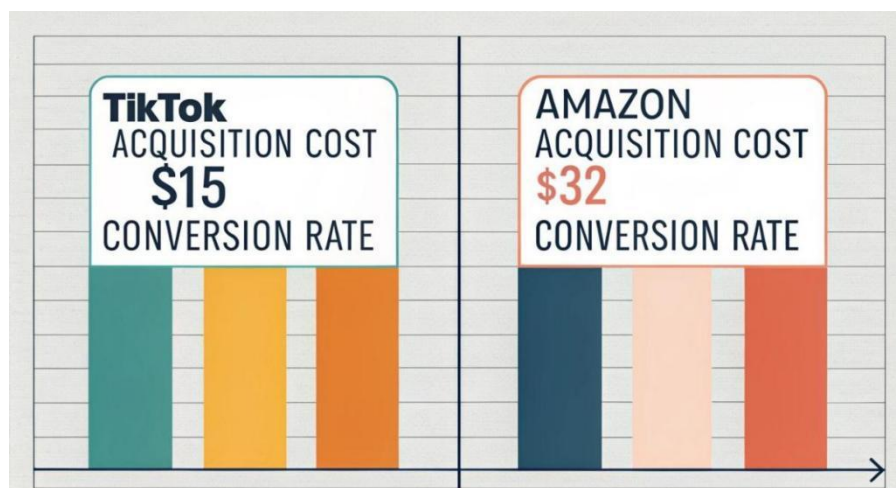
With the strengthening of regulations such as CcpA in the United States and the GDPR in the European Union, cross-border data transmission and the use of user information are facing strict constraints. Chinese enterprises need to establish a "data hierarchical management system" to store consumer data through localized servers, and the compliance rate is expected to increase to 98%. Enterprises also need to establish a data ethics review mechanism to ensure that data use conforms to ethical norms.

### 4.2 Differences between Products and Cultural Markets

African American consumers' stringent requirements for hairstyle diversity and fashion expression require Chinese enterprises to deepen research and development of innovative applications for white hair traits. Pilotage technology set up a research and development center in Luoyang, and worked with local designers to develop "hairstyle creation algorithm and adaptation technology", to improve the accuracy of product adaptation to 92% [15]. By deeply integrating into the local cultural context, enterprises have successfully transformed product differences into differentiated competitive advantages.

### 4.3 Flow Involution and Cost Escalation

Amazon's advertising costs rose by 25% annually, forcing enterprises to turn to "cost-effective traffic" operations. TikTok's UGC incentive plan: through TikTok's topic challenge \myhairstory, users are encouraged to upload wig-wearing videos to achieve 5 million views at a low cost, and user-generated content (UGC) accounts for 30% of new traffic [16]. The comparison of customer acquisition costs is clearly shown in Figure 3. By building an ecological closed loop of "content social business", enterprises have achieved self-circulation and low-cost traffic transformation.



**Figure 3** Comparison of Customer Acquisition Costs between TikTok and Amazon Platforms in 2023

## 5 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Conclusion

Drawing on the in-depth practice of Zhejiang Pilot Network Technology Co., Ltd. in the U.S. market, this paper constructs a three-dimensional path for the sustainable development of digital marketing in a culture-sensitive market, providing a replicable methodological framework for cross-border e-commerce.

#### 5.1.1 AI-driven precision marketing

Data intelligence reconstructs the match between supply and demand. Relying on big data and AI technology, enterprises realize the transformation from "experience-driven" to "data intelligence":

Through the analysis of Google Trends and TikTok hot words, we accurately captured the needs of white consumers, developed localized products such as "shape adaptation technology", and increased the sales of relevant wigs by 45%. Build an intelligent supply chain system, the number of days of inventory turnover was reduced to 45 days, and the rate of unsalable goods was reduced to 6.2%, which was 65% better than the industry average. This verified the core role of the "precise positioning" dimension of digital marketing capability, as proposed by Meng Tao and others, in improving efficiency.

#### 5.1.2 Value symbiotic brand construction

Integrate environmental responsibility and social value into the brand's core to create differentiated competitive barriers. Environment dimension. Launched the "eco hair" sustainable series, which uses natural plant dyes and has passed the Amazon "climate friendly commitment" certification, driving up the premium space by 20%, echoing the MD—Abdus Shabur's discussion on the integration of digital economy and green technology: Social dimension. Launched the "hair charity" program, donated 1% of the profit for each wig sold to the American Hair Loss Association fitting service, and the brand preference increased by 35%. The ESG score was certified by MSCI, which confirmed the high sensitivity of Generation Z consumers to social responsibility proposed by Sabakun Naher Shetu.

#### 5.1.3 Ecological construction omni-channel operation

Create a closed-loop ecosystem of "public traffic harvesting - private value precipitation - localized R&D response". On the public domain side, with TikTok Live and Shein Fast Fashion, we can break the traffic circle and reach 3 million Z-generation consumers. In the private domain, it provides value-added services such as hairstyle design and after-sales maintenance through Facebook community operation, and builds a link of "content interaction trust transformation word-of-mouth communication". Localization, the establishment of a U.S. R&D center, and the joint development of a "hairstyle creation library" by local designers have increased the product value coverage to 70%, effectively responding to the diverse needs of African American consumers.

### 5.2 Discussion

Through the case of pilot technology, this study reveals the sustainability mechanism of digital marketing in a culture-sensitive market. The research findings expand the traditional theory of cultural adaptation and show that when there are congenital cultural differences in products, enterprises can achieve value resonance through "cultural narrative reconstruction", which provides a new perspective for related theories. Practice shows that the three dimensions in the NVE model are intrinsically linked: cultural narrative reconstruction is the premise of value symbiosis, value symbiosis is the basis of ecological construction, and ecological construction, in turn, strengthens cultural narrative. This dynamic interaction constitutes the core mechanism of digital marketing sustainability. Compared with existing studies, this study's innovation is to propose a marketing solution for product culture dislocation, offering a new idea for cross-border e-commerce enterprises.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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