Article **Open Access**

The Role of Social Media Metrics in the Construction of Employer Brands for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Runqi Lin [1,*]

[1] College of Communication, Boston University, Massachusetts, 02215, USA

[*] Correspondence: Runqi Lin, College of Communication, Boston University, Massachusetts, 02215, USA

Abstract: In the context of information technology data transmission, social media has gradually become an important platform for small and medium-sized enterprises to shape their employer brand. Measuring the effectiveness of promotion and consumer response through social media data is an important approach, providing a basis for quantifying brand influence and adjusting operational strategies for small and medium-sized enterprises. Consistent tracking of metrics such as content exposure, user interaction, conversion paths, and emotional feedback can support corporate brand building and enhance social awareness of brand identity. This article mainly analyzes the development of an indicator system, its practical path application, and effectiveness evaluation, aiming to explore how to leverage social media data to build employer reputation and provide strategic insights for small businesses to enhance brand appeal and recruitment performance.

Keywords: social media indicators; small and medium-sized enterprises; employer brand; data-driven

1. Introduction

Small and medium-sized enterprises might face some challenges in recruiting talent, such as low brand exposure and weak attraction to outstanding talent. But the development of social networks opens up new possibilities for SMEs when it comes to brand building. Due to the increasing influence of digital media on people's daily behavior, showcasing companies on social networks is beneficial for establishing their own image. Compared with traditional promotional methods, the display of social networks provides faster information dissemination, facilitates the measurement of effectiveness, and allows for faster feedback, which perfectly meets the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises pursuing maximum cost efficiency. This study mainly explores the theoretical methods and empirical cases of using social network indicators to construct the employer brand of enterprises, to understand how it can better improve the public image of enterprises, adjust beneficial publicity, and enhance consumer trust.

2. Theoretical Framework of Social Media Indicators

New media indicators refer to the measurement of information transmission and user behavior on new media platforms, usually including exposure, interaction frequency, conversion rate, emotional inclination, etc. From a communication perspective, social media metrics have become an important component of measuring brand digital influence. Based on the information reception model, the reactions generated by users during the process of attention, participation, and acceptance can be digitally presented in the form

of data. Thus, a global measurement of the dissemination effect is generated, and key nodes can be effectively tracked throughout the entire process from content publishing to user response to behavior conversion, enhancing the ability to control and improve the dissemination route. With the increasing trend of decentralization on social platforms, user activities have become a key factor in communication routes, and indicator changes have gradually become sensitive signals reflecting changes in brand awareness. Similar to systematic strategies in digital commerce, social media indicators enable enterprises to capture user behavior and track conversion paths, thus providing data-driven support for brand management [1].

3. The Role of Social Media Indicators in Employer Branding

3.1. *Enhance Brand Information Dissemination Capability*

In the social media environment, reach and dissemination ability are important dimensions for considering the efficiency of corporate image building. For example, key indicators such as page views, exposure times, and topic readings can determine whether the information effectively covers the target audience. Small and medium-sized enterprises can advertise their products or services through diverse media formats like short videos, graphic and textual updates, topic participation, etc., breaking the limitations of traditional promotion and increasing the frequency of being watched and the probability of being known by consumers. The content dissemination path is influenced by various factors such as platform algorithm weight, publishing time period, fan base, and interactive activity. To better reflect the effectiveness of communication, the following expression can be used for basic modeling:

$$E = \frac{V \times R \times S}{T} \tag{1}$$

Among them, E, for the sake of communication efficiency, V for the initial browsing volume of the content, R for the forwarding rate, S to enhance the interaction intensity of comments, and T for the duration of dissemination [2]. This equation provides a quantitative basis for evaluating the external transmission effectiveness of different topics within a specific time range, and then uses this as a reference to allocate content. By constantly changing content construction, publishing time, and interactive forms, small businesses can expand their brand influence with limited resources, laying a solid foundation for employer brand building and talent recruitment through information dissemination.

3.2. *Strengthening the Perceived Value of Employer Image*

The perception of employer image is established through the emotional experiences and content interaction behaviors of potential job seekers on social media. Small and medium-sized enterprises can use indicator data to monitor the feedback intensity and emotional tendencies of users on the platform, in order to systematically analyze the audience's cognitive structure of brand image. The influence of the content presented by enterprises, such as employee life, corporate culture, and management philosophy, not only depends on the reach but also on trust and resonance signals released through interactions. To evaluate the perceived strength of employer image more accurately, a weighted employer perception index can be constructed:

$$WEPI = \frac{(w_1 \cdot L + w_2 \cdot C^+ + w_3 \cdot S + w_4 \cdot E)}{T} \tag{2}$$

Among them, L For the number of likes, C^+ For the number of positive comments, S The number of times the content has been forwarded, E To score for positive emotions, T For the total number of interactions, w_1, w_2, w_3, w_4 For the empirical weight coefficient, satisfy $w_1 + w_2 + w_3 + w_4 = 1$. This formula comprehensively considers the intensity of user behavior and emotional tendencies, which can more accurately reflect their attitude and cognitive level towards the brand. Small and medium-sized enterprises can establish this model to scientifically evaluate the actual effectiveness of the information released during

the employer image shaping process, and adjust their strategic direction and execution goals more accurately based on this [3].

3.3. Optimize Brand Operation Management Strategy

The core of brand operation lies in achieving precise allocation and continuous iteration of communication resources, which also relies on the strong support of social media indicator data. The common problems of small and medium-sized enterprises, such as resource scarcity and excessive investment, make it particularly necessary to establish an operational mechanism driven by indicators. By studying the activity level, user feedback, and content delivery effectiveness of different types of platforms, the marketing department can make adjustments to the coordination of content form, time nodes, and publishing methods. To provide a more systematic description of the comprehensive evaluation logic in the process of strategy optimization, a brand operation comprehensive score function can be constructed:

$$B_S = \frac{\alpha E + \beta I + \gamma C - \delta R}{\theta + 1} \tag{3}$$

Among them, B_S To comprehensively evaluate the effectiveness of operational management, E For exposure efficiency, I For the intensity of user interaction, CAs a conversion rate indicator, R To account for the proportion of negative feedback $\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta$. For weight coefficients, θ Intensity of resource consumption for dissemination. This model helps enterprises to balance the relationship between communication effects and communication costs more scientifically in different communication cycles [4]. By calculating on multiple dimensions, it is possible to better estimate the objective effects of different operational decisions in different dimensions, enabling small and medium-sized enterprises to build a relatively stable and efficient employer brand communication structure in the face of changes.

4. Practical Application of Social Media Indicators in Employer Branding for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

4.1. Establishing an Indicator Application Management System

In the diversified and cross-media communication field, small and medium-sized enterprises urgently need a standardized and systematic evaluation system for the effectiveness of social and educational media use. This evaluation system can serve as both an evaluation tool for social media content publishing and its effectiveness, as well as an important intermediary for communication content dissemination, strategy correction, and feedback adjustment. By setting target perspectives such as dissemination frequency, feedback interaction, behavior transformation, and consumer attitudes to evaluate target evaluations, enterprises can maintain effective follow-up, guidance, control, and adjustment in the full-dimensional, all-round, and cross-industry diffusion process of content dissemination, making information dissemination more visible and controllable [5].

To ensure the stability of the index system, data integration platforms and visualization devices can be used to collect information performance data uploaded from various websites, which can be uniformly organized and vertically compared. Then, dynamic thresholds and intelligent alarm systems can be established to timely detect possible deviations in network transmission and adjust tactical routes in a timely manner. Such precise control of information can improve the precise delivery effect of content, establish a standard data feedback path, guide the company's employer brand communication work to shift from experience-oriented data, promote the coordinated development of enterprises in terms of operating income and brand building, and form a dual wheel drive pattern [6].

4.2. Optimize the Feedback Content of Promotion Indicators

Content optimization is the most flexible and sensitive aspect of employer brand communication, and the performance of social media can serve as a reference measure for this aspect. Enterprises can obtain targeted feedback information by analyzing employees' data on different content types, forms of expression, and subject preferences, including dimensions such as expression, sharing paths, and duration of stay. Enterprises can accurately identify the attractiveness and resonance points of different content modules among audiences. These big data-based feedbacks are not only a means of evaluation but can also be used to improve content construction and strategic updates, such as optimizing title styles, visual layout, publishing time, or language expression, to meet user preferences and grasp the replacement of group user needs. Given the fast-paced and ever-changing nature of digital communication, it's not sustainable to rely on a single content model in the long run, and new resonance models need to be found based on this feedback.

The feedback of the system should extend to the interaction between content form and platform architecture. The effects of different forms of content, such as short videos, text, and image push notifications, and employee interviews vary significantly on different platforms. A/B experiments can be used to continuously optimize the structure and theme selection of the content. In content operation, changes in platform algorithms, fluctuations in topic popularity, and changes in user behavior may all cause fluctuations in indicators. Enterprises can respond quickly based on data and adjust their promotional strategies and execution paths in a timely manner. Using indicators as the most important reference indicators to create optimization models and enhance promotional effectiveness can also help companies form a stable employer brand.

4.3. Implementing Tool-Assisted Operational Closed Loop

In the social media dissemination of employer brand image, the timeliness of information is an important fundamental element. To form an effective operational cycle, cross-platform information should be linked through professional equipment to accelerate response speed and enhance decision-making efficiency. Small businesses can connect isolated and scattered data through data display dashboards, social media management tool platforms, and simple AI algorithm platforms to form an observation perspective and construct a comprehensive communication picture. For example, tool platforms such as Meltwater, Jindaoyun, Tower, etc. can provide task scheduling, data indicator tracking, and trend comparison functions, making the operation flow more consistent and clearer (Figure 1).
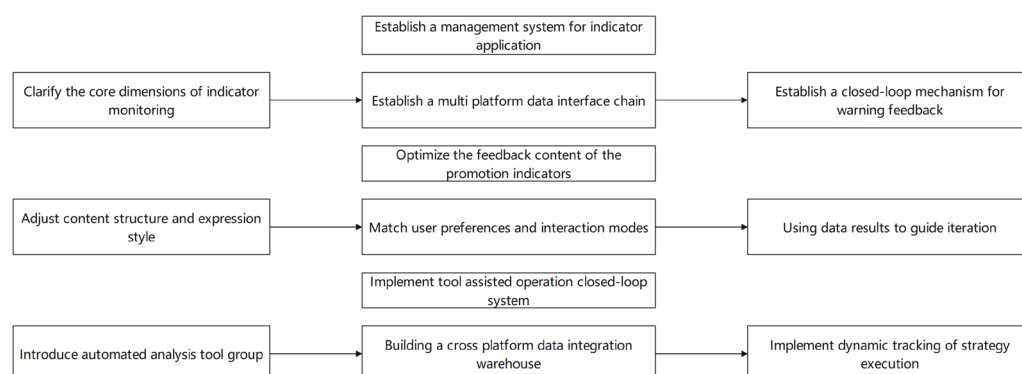
Figure 1. Practical Application of Employer Branding.

The application of various tools can greatly improve data processing speed, accelerate the implementation of strategies, and build feedback systems. In the routine operation behavior, key indicators can be monitored by setting warning lines, achieving automatic

weekly or monthly reports, discovering warning trends, and ensuring that all brand operation stages have data and tracking methods. In addition, enterprises can connect their data systems with talent recruitment systems through API interfaces, allowing for comprehensive tracking of the entire process, such as information dissemination, audience engagement, and job seeker applications. Through continuous development, business departments can integrate fragmented management processes into a structured and efficient strategic system, which is beneficial for the sustainable operation of small and medium-sized enterprise brands, providing stable data support and intelligent assistance.

5. Evaluations of the Effectiveness of Social Media Indicators in Employer Brand Building for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

5.1. Case Analysis

The reason why Precision Edge Manufacturing Co., a small business in Michigan, USA, finds it difficult to hire employees is that the employer's brand awareness is not high, and the job is not attractive. Therefore, by using short video platforms to establish a corporate employer brand and releasing the "Engineers Day" series of short videos, the number of views increased from 1500 to 9300, and the like rate increased from 3.2% to 11.5%. A data dashboard has been set up on Facebook to track browsing volume, interactivity, and user identification, and to integrate corporate culture, welfare policies, and career development paths into the content structure. After a complete implementation cycle, the number of job seekers visiting the recruitment website increased by 61.4%, more than doubling the number of job seekers compared to before, greatly improving the performance of recruitment. This case also demonstrates that even small and medium-sized enterprises can utilize excellent content and processes

5.2. Evaluation Indicators

Developing a suitable evaluation system framework is a prerequisite for measuring the effectiveness of employer brand promotion. The existing reference indicators mainly include exposure, interactivity, conversion rate, and emotional indicators. Among them, exposure reflects the area in which information is presented, interaction efficiency reflects the depth of user participation in information, conversion rate is mainly reflected in specific behaviors such as resume submission, and emotional indicators determine users' attitudes and tendencies towards information by analyzing keywords in comments. The comparison of different data can reveal the presentation of information, which can affect the public's impression of the employer brand and help companies discover their own strengths and weaknesses. With the help of quantitative data, long-term tracking can be achieved, and the effectiveness of publicity can be recorded in real time, providing clear directions for improvement in the future.

5.3. Data Collection Methods

Small and medium-sized enterprises can obtain social media indicator data through various means when carrying out employer brand communication. With the help of built-in internal statistical software provided by various platforms (such as WeChat public platform data assistant or TikTok's enterprise account data center, etc.), basic data, such as click volume, interaction frequency, fan change, and other indicators, can be obtained. Multi-account data collection and integration can be carried out through professional third-party platforms such as Meltwater, Jane Daoyun, etc., so as to achieve unified data management and visual analysis. Further enhancing the in-depth analysis of data information, sentiment analysis technology can also be used to identify and judge the meaning of comment content, and obtain customers' emotional trends and focus of attention. Diversified data sources enable companies to quickly perceive feedback trends during the promotional launch phase, thereby dynamically adjusting their strategic direction.

5.4. Verification of Indicator Effectiveness and Brand Linkage

In addition to changes in communication effectiveness, the results of employer brand communication can also be intuitively reflected in the indicators of social media. For example, after optimizing the content of a small and medium-sized enterprise, the brand browsing volume increased by 164.4%, the number of reviews and favorites increased by 132.5% and 78.6%, the number of job applicants more than doubled, and the conversion rate increased from 7.2% to 15.1%. This indicates that these data can not only serve as monitoring tools, but also as a decisive reference to assist in adjusting communication strategies. By tracking long-term interaction behavior, emotional preferences, and conversion paths, companies can help grasp and control the communication process, enhancing the connection between employer brand and consumer impression.

5.5. User Feedback and Collaborative Dissemination Results

Taking Allbirds, a small American lifestyle company, as an example, the use of social media content marketing strategies has resulted in a synergistic effect in enhancing consumer response and corporate image. In the 'Green Work Environment' project, Allbirds began using # SustainableWork hashtags, images, videos, and articles about employees to attract public attention. During the event, the content interaction rate increased from 5.3% to 11.7%, with positive reviews accounting for 88.5% and exposure exceeding 1.8 million. This led to a 42.6% increase in website visits and an average user stay of 65 seconds, demonstrating a significant increase in communication value and brand stickiness (as shown in Table 1).

Table 1. Allbirds Collaborative data between social media dissemination and user feedback.

Indicator project	Pre-event values	Value after activity	Percentage increase
Content interaction rate	5.3%	11.7%	+120.7%
Proportion of positive emotional comments	74.2%	88.5%	+19.3%
Exposure (times)	980,000	1,800,000	+83.7%
Official website visit growth rate	-	42.6%	+42.6%

From the data in Table 1, it can be seen that Allbirds has successfully improved consumers' attitudes towards the brand by changing its social media marketing strategy. For example, the content engagement rate has increased from 5.3% to 11.7%, an increase of 120.7%; The positive emotional evaluation rate has also increased to 88.5%, with more positive emotional evaluations; The exposure increased by 83.7%, and the coverage significantly expanded. In addition, the number of visitors to the official website has increased by 42.6%, and the time visitors spend on the page has increased from 38 seconds to 65 seconds, an increase of 71.1%. These indicators indicate that this strategic adjustment is conducive to enhancing information persuasion and corporate image.

6. Conclusion

Social media indicators are playing an increasingly important role in employer branding for small and medium-sized enterprises. By comprehensively collecting and deeply mining data, information flow-oriented optimization can be achieved to enhance the employer's brand reputation. User behavior also shows a clear trend of conversion, and the function of indicators in data structures is not only for result evaluation, but also for guiding strategies and optimizing content materials. In the data-driven operation concept, indicators can help enterprises understand audience preferences, improve communication efficiency and attractiveness, and enhance the visibility of employer brands. With the deepening of application, the indicator system is also showing an increasingly refined and intelligent development trend.

References

1. B. Wu, "Market Research and Product Planning in E-commerce Projects: A Systematic Analysis of Strategies and Methods," Academic Journal of Business & Management, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 45–53, 2025, doi: 10.25236/AJBM.2025.070307.

2. T. Suryani, A. A. Fauzi, and M. Nurhadi, "SOME-Q: A model development and testing for assessing the consumers' perception of social media quality of small medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)," Journal of Relationship Marketing, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 62-90, 2021.

3. P. Mongeon, T. D. Bowman, and R. Costas, "An open data set of scholars on Twitter," Quantitative Science Studies, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 314-324, 2023, doi: 10.1162/qss_a_00250.

4. W. Mingkun, Q. Wei, S. Misra, and R. Savage, "Research on differential and interactive impact of China-led and US-led open-access articles," Journal of Information Science, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 248-260, 2023.

5. P. Unnikrishnan, and R. Baral, "Reimagining HR practices to attract and engage gig talent: An organisational perspective," NHRD Network Journal, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 248-257, 2023, doi: 10.1177/26314541231170433.

6. M. Bagheri, T. Baum, A. A. Mobasheri, and A. Nikbakht, "Identifying and ranking employer brand improvement strategies in post-COVID 19 tourism and hospitality," Tourism and Hospitality Research, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 391-405, 2023, doi: 10.1177/14673584221112607.