

Discover the User Satisfaction of Overseas Wechat Official Accounts through Kano Model

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Abstract: In the digital age, rapid socio-economic shifts have intensified competition among enterprises, particularly in the realm of new media. New media companies leverage fan economy dynamics to gain prominence. As competition diversifies across dimensions like price, quality, service, and user experience, the common goal remains user satisfaction. This requires understanding latent user needs, integrating a user-centric approach in product development, and aligning offerings with genuine user requirements.

Keywords: User Satisfaction, WeChat Official Account, Kano Model, Social media.

1. INTRODUCTION

User satisfaction is a significant concept in management studies, with its theoretical foundation extending from the perspectives of consumer behavior and marketing. Drawing from consumer satisfaction research, it is defined as consumers' response to the degree of contentment they derive from a product or service. It represents an evaluative feedback mechanism, measuring the extent to which consumers' needs, desires, or goals are met by the product or service. Simultaneously, in the Internet age, the rapid development of the socio-economic landscape has given rise to a new wave of competition among enterprises, especially those operating in the domain of new media. According to the 51st "China Internet Development Status Report" released by the China Internet Network Information Center [1], as of December 2022, China's internet user base reached 1.067 billion, with an internet penetration rate of 75.6%[1]. This indicates the crucial foundational role of the internet in digital economic development and its pivotal role in people's daily lives, particularly with social networks becoming an essential means of daily communication. Based on Tencent's financial report for the first quarter of 2022, WeChat had 128.83 million monthly active users ("MAUs"). The WeChat Official Accounts (WeChat OAs) amounted to 360 million users. Over 120 million active users read WeChat OA articles daily and share content in their moments[2].

New media companies have become major players in this competitive landscape, leveraging the power of the fan economy to establish their prominence.. Faced with an increasingly competitive environment, the scope of competition and its forms have become more diverse, encompassing price, quality, service, and user experience[3].

Ultimately, all these forms of competition converge on the common goal of satisfying users. Understanding users' latent needs, identifying their genuine requirements, and integrating a user-centric philosophy into product development to enhance user satisfaction have become indispensable factors for gaining a competitive edge. However, in the face of diversified user demands and continually segmented product markets, accurately grasping the requirements that lead to user satisfaction has become more challenging and even presents certain contradictions. From the user's perspective, within a certain range, the greater the number of functional attributes included in a product, the higher the degree of demand fulfillment, resulting in an enhanced user experience and increased satisfaction[4]Conversely, from the enterprise's perspective, constantly adding new features to products inevitably incurs significant technological, human resource, and maintenance costs. Therefore, enterprises must judiciously prioritize and focus on developing requirements that hold high importance, are urgent, and promise substantial improvements in user satisfaction[5].

In conclusion, effectively addressing these key issues is crucial for businesses to accurately identify and leverage knowledge from customers, unearth user satisfaction needs, and make informed decisions in product development and improvement strategies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Wechat Official Account

In 2012, Tencent introduced WeChat Official Accounts(WeChat OAs), which support various organizations to recommend text and image messages to their followers, boasting high information dissemination efficiency, effective transmission rates, and strong interactivity, establishing WeChat as the largest content publishing and reading platform[6]. The main slogan of WeChat Official Accounts is "Even the smallest individual has its own brand," aiming to enable users to voice their opinions and engage in communication with a broader audience. With the expansion of WeChat Official Account features, the original messaging tool transformed from point-to-point communication to a platform for social interaction and information dissemination[3].

1) Types of WeChat OA

Categorization by Function: WeChat OAs can be classified into three categories based on their functions: service accounts, subscription accounts, and enterprise accounts. Enterprise Accounts are primarily aimed at internal administration within companies and constitute a small proportion of the three types of WeChat OAs[7].

Table 1. Classification by function of WeChat Official Accounts

Type	Function Introduction	Applicable to
Service Accounts	Primarily focused on interactive services (similar to banks, mobile operator service for customer, Travel and Hospitality), they can send up to four messages per month.	For businesses, governments or organizations to provide services to their users.
Subscription Accounts	Primarily focused on delivering information to users (similar to newspapers and magazines), they can only send one message per day.	For media and individuals to provide a way to disseminate information to users who follow them.
Enterprise Accounts	It is a product targeted at the enterprise-level market and serves as an independent and efficient communication tool for basic office functions.	For enterprises, governments, institutions and non-governmental organizations to achieve production management, and collaboration

Subscription accounts are allowed to send one message per day, and early-registered accounts even retain the privilege of sending three messages per day. It can be observed that the majority of WeChat users receive article pushes from WeChat subscription accounts. Therefore, in this study of WeChat official account user satisfaction, the focus will be on WeChat subscription accounts.

2) Current situation of overseas WeChat OAs

Overseas WeChat Official Accounts (WeChat OAs), not only cater to the dissemination of information in Chinese among overseas Chinese communities but also address the urgent need for timely information among overseas Chinese. With the iterative updates in WeChat technology, WeChat OAs are capable of customizing additional functionalities to meet the living demands of Chinese residents in foreign countries.

In the current era of audience demand and communication rules, Chinese media platforms have gradually shifted from traditional media to social media and other social application software. The emergence of overseas Chinese new media platforms, such as WeChat, Weibo, websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, etc., undoubtedly offers new opportunities to enhance the living experiences of overseas Chinese. These new media platforms provide convenient means of information access and communication for overseas Chinese, enabling them to easily understand the cultural, political, and social dynamics of their residence and homeland, as well as engage in interactive exchanges of ideas with fellow compatriots. of The establishment of overseas Chinese WeChat OAs initially aimed to assist local Chinese residents in accessing overseas news and commercial consultations while

simultaneously providing reference information for Chinese individuals planning to travel to or move to specific countries.

B. Kano Model

Japanese scholar Noriaki Kano officially proposed the Kano model in 1984. The Kano model is a valuable tool used to assess and categorize customer preferences and needs based on their responses to different product or service features. It is widely recognized in the fields of marketing, product development, and customer satisfaction research. Based on the relationship between objective product performance and subjective user perception, this model categorizes user needs into five types: Must-be Needs (M), One-dimensional Needs (O), Attractive Needs (A), Indifferent Needs (I), and Reverse Needs (R)[8], [9].

Table 2. Quality dimensions of Kano model

Quality Elements	Interpretation
Attractive	An attribute which can be called "bonus- pleases a customer when is present but has no negative effect when is not fulfilled.
Must-be	An attribute which is unnoticeable by a customer when is fulfilled, but has strong negative effect on customer satisfaction when is not fulfilled
One-dimensional	An attribute causes dissatisfaction of customer when does not meet expectations but has a positive effect on satisfaction when exceeds them.
Reverse	An attribute which has to be avoided when customer is to be satisfied
Indifferent	An attribute has neither positive nor negative effect on customer satisfaction

1) Kano Model & CKM

One of a company's most valuable external knowledge sources can be its customers. For businesses to obtain a competitive edge, they need to be able to recognize the value of fresh information from outside sources, such as clients.[10]Rollins and Halinen highlight that customer knowledge is not only a valuable resource but also a key strategic asset that can significantly impact a company's success. In today's dynamic and competitive business landscape, organizations must recognize the crucial role that customer knowledge plays in shaping their strategies and decisions[11].

Customer knowledge encompasses a deep understanding of customers' preferences, needs, behaviors, and expectations. [12], [13]By gathering and analyzing this valuable information, companies can gain insights into their target market, allowing them to develop tailored products, services, and marketing campaigns that resonate with their customers on a more personal level.

The Kano model and Customer knowledge management (CKM) have a mutually reinforcing relationship. CKM refers to how organizations effectively acquire, organize, analyze, and apply customer knowledge to gain a deeper understanding of customer needs, preferences, and feedback. In this process, the Kano model serves as a crucial tool and method to help organizations better comprehend customer satisfaction and expectations, and translate this information into viable strategies and practices. Through CKM, businesses can accumulate a wealth of information about their customers, including their needs, preferences, purchasing behavior, and feedback on products or services[11], [14]. These knowledge resources provide a data foundation for the application of the Kano model, enabling organizations to accurately identify which product features or service attributes are most critical to customers.

3. METHODOLOGY

The primary focus of this research is to comprehensively understand user satisfaction and preferences regarding Overseas WeChat Official Accounts (WeChat OAs). By adopting mixed-methods, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of user needs and provide overseas WeChat Official OAs' operators with a development strategy focused on enhancing user satisfaction. The research process will be guided by the KM process framework, which includes three key stages: Knowledge Capture and Identify, Organize and Analyze Knowledge, and Apply and Update.

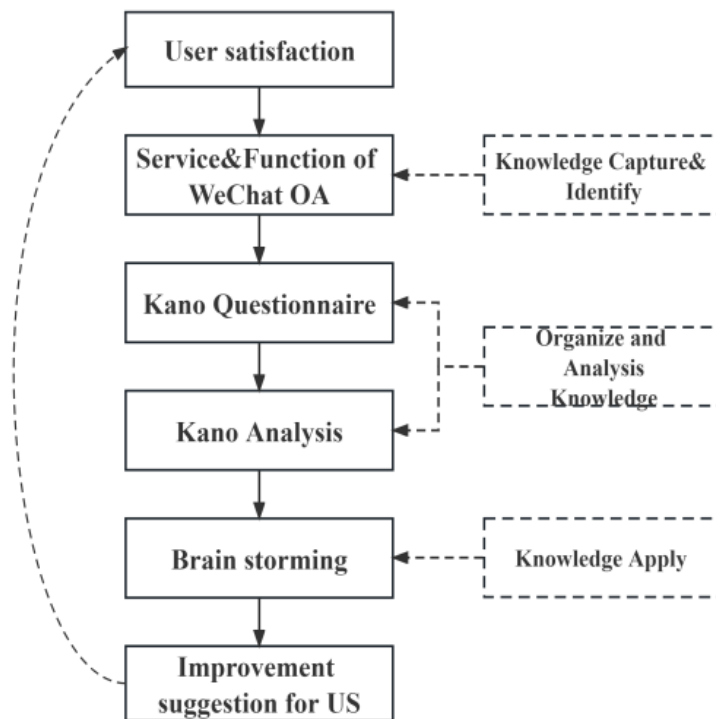


Figure 1. Research Framework

C. Knowledge Capture Identify

During first stage, the research focus lies in the identification and acquisition of user demands and expectations concerning Overseas WeChat OAs. We employ a series of systematic methods to capture and consolidate knowledge from various sources, including customer insights. This comprehensive knowledge gathering and organization process not only aids us in gaining a more holistic understanding of user requirements and expectations.

In this study, data was collected and analyzed from 21 Official Accounts of company in the case study to identify the functions and services they provide. Additionally, searches were conducted on WeChat OAs using keywords of countries like the United States, Japan, Canada, and Thailand. This facilitated the observation and summary of services and functions offered by these WeChat OAs, resulting in the compilation of the current functions available in overseas Chinese WeChat OAs. In addition to the previously mentioned data collection methods, interviews were conducted with 10 individuals who have overseas living experience and actively follow overseas WeChat OAs. Through these interviews, valuable insights into their expectations and needs regarding such official accounts were obtained.

Table 3. Services & Functions of Overseas WeChat OAs

No.	Type	Function	Description
1	Information Services	Real Estate Information	Property rentals, property sales
2		Job Information	Job postings, job search
3		Travel Information	Restaurant introductions, tourist attractions, daily exchange rates
4	Local Life Services	Food Delivery	Food delivery platform(Chinese-based)
5		Mobile Recharge	Phone credit recharge, data recharge, broadband services in Southeast Asia countries

No.	Type	Function	Description
6	Travel Services	Hotel Reservations	Local hotel booking service
7		Flight Reservations	Overseas flight bookings and Domestic airline reservations
8		Visa Services	Long-term or Travel visa processing assistance
9	Language Services	Language Learning	Basic language online course for beginners
10		Language Translation	Free automated translation service, paid accurate human translation service

D. Organize and Analysis Knowledge

1) Kano questionnaire design

The survey questionnaire for this study consists of two main parts. The first part gathers basic information about the respondents, demographic characteristics, and the duration of their usage of overseas WeChat OA. The second part comprises the Kano questionnaire, which investigates user preferences for the functions and services of overseas official accounts.

The Kano model employs a survey tool that overcomes biases generated by traditional needs-based survey instruments. To eliminate inconsistency and bias (i.e., treating each requirement as equally important), each requirement is asked in two ways. The first question is functional (positive), and the second question is dysfunctional (negative). The first question aims to understand how users/customers feel when the proposed function is present or the requirement is fulfilled, while the second question aims to understand their feelings if the expected function is absent or the requirement is not met. Each question, whether functional or dysfunctional, has a list of five options: 1. "I like it" (Like), "It must be that way" (Must), 3. "I am neutral" (Neutral), 4. "I can live with it" (Live with), and 5. "I dislike it" (Dislike). For each function, both positive and negative questions were included, following the order in Table IV, to design[15], [16].

Table 4. Sample of Questionnaire

Service	Question	Like it that way	It must be that way	Neutral	Can live with it that way	Dislike it that way
Real Estate Information	How do you feel Laowotong WCOA can provide this service					
	How do you feel Laowotong WCOA can Not provide this service					

2) Data Collection method

The data collection method employed both online and offline approaches. Online data collection was conducted using the online survey platform "Questionnaire Net." Additionally, in the offline context, we collaborated with Good Media Company(A company that operates 21 overseas WeChat OAs) to distribute paper-based questionnaires. Throughout the data collection process, a total of 110 questionnaires were collected. Among them, 92 questionnaires were deemed valid, resulting in an effective response rate of 83.6%.

3) Kano analysis

Kano Evaluation Table: After the survey is completed, the results are tabulated and summarized to show how most users/customers express their needs, categorized as M "Must-Be," O "One-Dimensional," A "Attractive," I "Indifferent," R "Reverse," and Q "Questionable." Data Collection[17].

		Dysfunctional question				
		Like	Must-be	Neutral	Live with	Dislike
Functional question	Like	Q	A	A	A	O
	Must-be	R	I	I	I	M
	Neutral	R	I	I	I	M
	Live with	R	I	I	I	M
	Dislike	R	R	R	R	Q

Figure 2. The Kano evaluation table

For a given requirement, the category with the highest count/number among these categories is selected as the category for that requirement. The evaluation rule is "M>O>A>I," guiding decisions when determining which features/requirements have a greater impact on the perceived quality of the proposed software product[9].

Berger (1993) made advancements to the Kano model by introducing the customer satisfaction coefficient (CS) for individual requirements. The CS determines whether meeting the requirements of a product can lead to increased satisfaction or whether meeting the requirements only prevents customers from being dissatisfied. The CS provides an average measure of how a product requirement affects the satisfaction of all users or customers.

The satisfaction index (SI) represents the positive CS coefficient, while the dissatisfaction index (DI) represents the negative CS coefficient[18]. The computation formulas for SI (extent of satisfaction) and DI (extent of dissatisfaction) are defined as follows by Berger [9].

$$\text{Satisfaction Index} = (A+O) / (A+O+M+I)$$

$$\text{Dissatisfaction Index} = (O+M) / (A+O+M+I)$$

E. Knowledge Apply

After obtaining the analyzed data results, which provide insights into the factors influencing user satisfaction and preferences for overseas official accounts, the next step is to conduct brainstorming sessions and visualize ideas using a mind map. The following steps outline the process:

- 1) **Establish Objectives Based on User Feedback:** Take into consideration the previous data analysis and user evaluations. Incorporate user needs and pain points into the plan's objectives to ensure that the strategies proposed are user-centered.
- 2) **Determine Priorities:** Set priorities for different strategies, considering factors such as resources, time, and costs, to identify the most viable and important strategies to implement first.
- 3) **Encourage Open Discussion:** During brainstorming, create an environment that fosters open discussion where team members can freely propose a wide range of ideas and suggestions, irrespective of their initial feasibility. An open discussion helps stimulate innovative thinking.
- 4) **Pose Thought-Provoking Questions:** During the brainstorming process, pose questions that encourage participants to think deeply and creatively.
- 5) **Explore Detailed Insights:** Expand on each major branch to delve into more specific details, expressing them using concise keywords or phrases. For instance, under the "Product Improvement" branch, sub-branches could include "Enhanced Features," "Quality Enhancement," and "Innovative Design."

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. User Information

The survey involved a diverse group of respondents, with 35.9% being male and 64.1% female. In terms of age, the majority of respondents fell into the 18-28 age group (87.0%), with smaller percentages in the other age categories.

Most respondents are in the 18-28 age group. This is consistent with the general trend that younger people are more likely to engage with digital platforms like WeChat. When asked about the platforms they typically use to view local news and information about Laos, WeChat emerged as the dominant choice, with 70.7% of respondents indicating its use. Facebook was the next most popular platform at 20.7%. However, Facebook can be used for faster access to information, but there are certain barriers, most of which require knowledge of English or the local language.

When it came to the typical period for viewing WeChat OAs, 55.4% of respondents preferred to do so between 18:00 PM and 22:00 PM. Frequency of viewing Laos WeChat OAs showed diversity, with 32.6% viewing once a week or less, 37.0% 2-3 times a week, and 15.2% 4-5 times a week. The peak time for viewing WeChat OAs from 18:00 PM to 22:00 PM aligns with typical leisure hours after work or studies. This information is crucial for content scheduling and publication timing.

B. Kano analysis

Table 5. Kano requirements categorization table

Items	A	O	M	I	R	Q	Total	Category
Q1	22	17	20	28	3	2	92	I
Q2	24	23	23	16	2	4	92	A
Q3	15	32	23	20	1	1	92	O
Q4	21	23	14	29	2	3	92	I
Q5	5	28	11	40	2	6	92	I
Q6	3	20	13	50	1	5	92	I
Q7	22	15	16	34	1	4	92	I
Q8	14	24	12	34	5	3	92	I
Q9	31	21	12	23	1	4	92	A
Q10	12	15	16	41	2	6	92	I

From Table V it can be observed that among the primary service offerings of Overseas WeChat OAs, Q3 (Travel information) falls into the category of One-dimensional requirements. If these types of requirements are promptly met, users experience satisfaction. However, if left unfulfilled, it results in user dissatisfaction. Consequently, the Travel information feature is pivotal in enhancing user satisfaction for Overseas WeChat OAs. It also serves as a critical factor in establishing a competitive edge for Overseas WeChat OAs within similar platforms.

Secondly, among the primary service offerings of Overseas WeChat OAs, the Q2 (Job Information) and Q9 (Language Learning) features exhibit the characteristics of Attractive requirements. Attractive requirements can be seen as users' implicit needs. Once satisfied, user satisfaction experiences a significant surge. However, users do not become dissatisfied if these types of requirements are left unmet. Despite being implicit needs, these two features have the capacity to delight users and set Overseas WeChat OAs apart from others.

Table 6. Customer satisfaction coefficient result

Function & Service	No.	Items	SI	Rank	DI	Rank
Information Services	Q1	Real Estate Information	0.448	6	0.425	5
	Q2	Job Information	0.547	2	0.535	2
	Q3	Travel Information	0.522	3	0.611	1
Local Life Services	Q4	Food Delivery	0.506	4	0.425	5
	Q5	Mobile Recharge	0.393	8	0.464	3

Function & Service	No.	Items	SI	Rank	DI	Rank
Travel Services	Q6	Hotel Reservations	0.267	10	0.384	7
	Q7	Flight Reservations	0.425	7	0.356	10
	Q8	Visa Services	0.452	5	0.429	4
Language Services	Q9	Language Learning	0.598	1	0.379	8
	Q10	Language Translation	0.321	9	0.369	9

From Table VI, it can be observed that the top three features and services with the highest coefficient scores are Q2 (Job Information), Q3 (Travel Information), and Q9 (Language Learning). This indicates that providing these three services leads to a relatively higher increase in satisfaction among Overseas WeChat Official Account users.

C. Brain storming result

Table 7. Brainstorming form based on Kano analysis

Priority	objective	Description	Question Prepared
1	Travel Information (O)	Restaurant introductions, tourist attractions, daily exchange rates (Information quality)	What are the channels for obtaining up-to-date and accurate travel information?
			How can detailed information on local culture, customs and characteristics be provided?
			What are the ways to collect users' travel experiences and sharing to enrich the content of the information?
2	Job Information (A)	Job postings, job search	What are some ways to continually update and maintain job postings to ensure they are current?
			What do you think users expect in terms of interaction and engagement with job postings?
3	Language Learning (A)	Basic language online video course or article for beginners	What topics are easy for beginners to grasp and use on a daily basis?
			What form of presentation, graphic, or video, in order to meet the needs of users without increasing labor costs and time costs?

Integrating the insights from Kano analysis and the careful ranking of feature and service preferences for overseas Chinese WeChat OAs, we derived insightful conclusions from the synthesized data. With these conclusions as our foundation, we proceeded to construct a well-defined objective, setting it as a focal point for our next steps. Recognizing the value of diverse perspectives, we engaged two key figures from Good Media's management team and another two experts from the digital marketing domain. These industry professionals were essential additions to our brainstorming session, adding depth and expertise to our collaborative efforts. The following is the result of the brainstorming discussion:

1) Travel Information

- Utilize official government travel websites.
- Integrate real-time flight and hotel APIs.
- Curate content from travel bloggers and vloggers.
- Collaborate with local tourism boards
- User-generated content submissions
- User incentive system

2) Job Information

- Real-time integration
- Automated posting tools
- Collaborate with business associations
- Collaborate with school employment offices
- Multimedia Content

3) Language Learning

- Provide language and etiquette guides
- Vocabulary and phrases for ordering food,
- Vocabulary for shopping essentials and bargaining
- Phrases for using public transportation
- Vocabulary for seeking help, expressing urgency
- Learning numbers for basic counting

5. CONCLUSION

The application of the Kano model in categorizing user preferences for various features and services has been instrumental in this study. By systematically evaluating and classifying these preferences, we have gained valuable insights into what truly matters to users of overseas WeChat OAs. This categorization has allowed us to understand not only the basic requirements that users expect but also the elements that have the potential to delight them, provide more competitive content and features, and ultimately enhance user satisfaction and loyalty. This helps overseas WeChat OAs stand out in a competitive market.

Moreover, the combination of Kano model results with a targeted brainstorming discussion has yielded practical and focused recommendations. This collaborative approach brought together the theoretical framework of the Kano model with real-world perspectives from industry experts and users themselves. This synergy has resulted in recommendations that are not only theoretically grounded but also aligned with the actual needs and expectations of the users.

In conclusion, the study's utilization of the Kano model and the subsequent brainstorming discussion has provided a comprehensive and insightful view of user preferences within the context of overseas WeChat OAs. The recommendations derived from this holistic approach offer actionable guidance for the development and enhancement of these WeChat OAs, ensuring that they are better aligned with user desires and capable of delivering a more satisfying experience. This study serves as a valuable resource for anyone seeking to create or improve WeChat Official Accounts that truly resonate with their target audience.

However, the study primarily targeted overseas Chinese users, which may limit the generalizability of the research results due to geographical and cultural backgrounds. This constraint affects the external validity of the study, as users from different cultural and geographical backgrounds may have varying needs and preferences. For instance, in countries like Thailand with a thriving tourism industry, local public accounts might offer more comprehensive travel-related information and services. Future research could consider expanding the coverage of sample regions to gain a more extensive understanding of the usage demands of overseas WeChat public account users.

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