

Typical Modes of Internet Enterprises' Hypocrisy in CSR and Countermeasures

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Abstract

Compared with traditional enterprises, Internet enterprises based on the Internet usually have a higher level of social attributes, and their goods or services can often affect more social groups and greater social interests. It means that if Internet enterprises lack sense of social responsibility and self-restraint ability, and show the corporate hypocrisy which means inconsistent in words and deeds, it will cause serious harm to the interests of social groups. Therefore, this paper will deeply analyze the typical modes and impact of internet enterprises' hypocrisy in CSR, and propose corresponding countermeasures and suggestions.

Keywords

Social responsibility; Internet enterprise; Hypocrisy in CSR; Typical modes; Control countermeasures.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, with the continuous improvement of Internet technology, more and more Internet enterprises are emerging, and their business touches almost every aspect of social life. Naturally, because of its strong social influence, all sectors of society pay great attention to the social responsibility performance of Internet enterprises. So, more and more Internet enterprises have begun to publish corporate social responsibility reports and attach importance to the image building of enterprises about corporate social responsibility. And in June this year, the Internet industry also released China's first corporate social responsibility research report on the Internet industry. However, the truth of the matter is disappointing. Many Internet enterprises have been exposed for their hypocritical behaviors of "saying one thing and doing another" in terms of social responsibility performance. Such as fake incidents of e-commerce which accompanied by "authentic guarantee", frequent crimes committed by car Hailing drivers under "safety commitment" of Internet transportation platform, etc., most of these events have evolved into large-scale crisis events, causing direct or indirect adverse effects on enterprises and society.

In general, corporate hypocrisy from the perspective of social responsibility (hypocrisy in CSR) refers to the phenomenon of "words and deeds inconsistent" in corporate social responsibility, that is, enterprises violate or fail to fully realize their commitments on corporate social responsibility. In the existing researches, hypocritical behaviors in CSR are mainly classified by the two-dimensional structure of corporate social responsibility commitment level and implementation level, including Machiavellian behavior, opportunism behavior and other types of hypocritical behaviors. Thus, hypocritical behaviors of internet enterprises in CSR are diversified and abundant, and correspondingly, their influences and consequences are also different. Moreover, internet enterprises born in the context of the Internet era have presented

more complex and diverse hypocrisy behaviors in CSR. And because of the characteristics of the internet industry with fast information dissemination and wide influence range, some typical and special hypocrisy behaviors in CSR have been produced by internet enterprises, which usually cause more serious social harm. However, there are not enough studies on the hypocrisy behaviors in CSR of this specific industry ——the Internet industry in the existing research. There is a lack of in-depth analysis and coping strategies for the typical modes of Internet Enterprises' hypocrisy in CSR.

Therefore, this paper will explore the typical modes and possible consequences of hypocrisy behaviors of Internet Enterprises based on the perspective of social responsibility, and try to propose corresponding governance countermeasures. This paper hopes to help the public to identify the hypocritical behaviors of Internet enterprises in the field of social responsibility, at the same time, to help Internet enterprises improve their self-monitoring awareness of their responsibility performance, and to provide reference ideas for effective governance and reduction of the hypocritical behaviors of Internet enterprises in the field of social responsibility.

2. TYPICAL MODES OF INTERNET ENTERPRISES' HYPOCRISY IN CSR

2.1. Inadequate Supervision

Inadequate supervision means that internet enterprises, as third-party platforms, fail to effectively supervise the services and information provided by service providers, thus violating the relevant commitments of Internet enterprises to consumers. This is a typical and widespread mode of Internet enterprises' hypocrisy in CSR, such as "Authentic Promise" of E-commerce platform and "Safety Commitment" of online car-hailing platform, etc. Usually, this form of corporate hypocrisy is not due to the original intention of these enterprises, but due to the corporate management defects induced by the rapid development of the enterprises and the large scales of the enterprises. Even so, this kind of behavior still violates the positive propaganda of the enterprises and has caused adverse effects to all social parties. Internet enterprises should give deep thought to this phenomenon and explore effective supervision methods.

2.2. Profit of Inductivity

Internet enterprises, as a party that has mastered big data information of consumer, use asymmetric information and other conditions to display induced information to users so as to obtain more enterprise benefits, which completely deviates from the relevant commitments on "customers" and "integrity" in their core business concepts, such as bundle sales of travel Internet platforms, big data killing old users, etc. This kind of behavior is mainly induced by the profit-seeking nature of internet enterprises and develops in the environment of information asymmetry, often causing the loss of consumers' interests. This kind of behavior of internet enterprises has certain subjective intention and concealment, which needs to be improved by relying more on the moral cultivation of the enterprises themselves.

2.3. False Propaganda

Deceptive propaganda is not only reflected in the false propaganda made by Internet enterprises in the platform business activities in order to increase the sales volume of commodities or increase the flow of the platform, such as the endless price fraud on the e-commerce platform at the annual shopping festival, etc. It is also reflected in the fact that internet enterprises violate the employees' recruiting propaganda and harm the rights or interests of employees, such as various disguised layoffs, etc. This kind of behavior is subjectively deceptive or intentional, which enterprises act to protect or seek its own interests

and at the cost of harming the rights and interests of other stakeholders. In fact, this kind of behavior will not only harm the interests of consumers or employees, once exposed, the enterprise's own brand reputation will also be questioned, which is not conducive to its long-term development. Enterprises should reflect on this and seek a sustainable instead of a short-sighted way of making profits. Meanwhile, all social parties, including consumers, employees and the media, should intensify supervision.

2.4. Lawbreaking Behavior

Lawbreaking behavior refers to certain acts of internet enterprises walking on the edge of laws, even violating relevant laws or regulations. The pyramid model of social responsibility was constructed by Carroll from four levels: economic responsibility, legal responsibility, ethical responsibility and charitable responsibility. Enterprises must fulfill the legal responsibility, which belongs to the lower level of corporate social responsibility. However, many Internet enterprises have not fully fulfilled their legal responsibilities, repeatedly stepping into the minefield and being fully investigated and punished by relevant government departments. For example, p2p online loan platform illegally raises funds, social e-commerce platform is involved in pornography and peer vicious competition, etc. Judging from the past cases, internet enterprises of different types and sizes are all likely to make such mistakes. They will also pay for this, at the very least they will be fined, and in serious cases they will be taken off the platform for rectification. Whatever, all these enterprises will pay the legal price and bear the corresponding economic losses.

3. HARM OF INTERNET ENTERPRISES' HYPOCRISY IN CSR

From the above-mentioned four typical modes of internet enterprises' hypocrisy in CSR, it can be seen that the hypocritical behaviors of internet enterprises in the field of social responsibility will not only harm the interests of various stakeholders of the enterprise, but also adversely affect the long-term and healthy development of their own brands. Based on different stakeholders, the harm of internet enterprises' hypocrisy in CSR is mainly reflected in the following four aspects.

(1) Harm to users. The hypocritical behavior of internet enterprises in the field of social responsibility usually brings economic losses and bad experience to the users, and sometimes even endangers the personal safety of users.

(2) Harm to employees. If internet enterprises take hypocritical actions against consumers or society, they will usually make employees feel shamed, and sometimes they will cause more work burden to employees. Their employees need to explain and deal with the improper behavior of the enterprises to others as well as accept self-examination. What's more, when such hypocritical behaviors of enterprises occur to their own employees, it often causes direct economic losses or even healthy damage to them.

(3) Harm to society. The hypocritical behavior of Internet enterprises in the field of social responsibility sometimes harm the overall social interests. For example, bidding ranking will cover up the real voice; Malignant competition is not conducive to social progress; Bad marketing affects social atmosphere, etc.

(4) Harm to enterprises. Although internet enterprises often engage in hypocritical behaviors about social responsibility due to their rapid development, insufficient management ability or profit-seeking nature, it does not mean that enterprises will not be punished by such behaviors. On the contrary, once this kind of behaviors is exposed, the brand reputation and image of the enterprise will be severely influenced, which will affect the purchase intention of consumers and is not conducive to the long-term development of the enterprise.

4. COUNTERMEASURES

Whether the hypocritical behaviors of internet enterprises in social responsibility can be effectively controlled and managed is related to the long-term healthy development of the internet industry as well as the interests of all parties in society, which must attract the attention of academia and all sectors of society. This paper argues that in order to effectively control such behaviors, we need to establish a triangular controlling mechanism among enterprises, social media and the government. While promoting the moral level of internet enterprises and enhancing their awareness of corporate social responsibility, we also need effective supervision and exposure from social media and improvement of laws and regulations of government departments.

4.1. Internal Governance of Internet Enterprises

Internet enterprises often behave hypocritically in social responsibility practice due to their pursuit of short-term interests or insufficient ability. Therefore, the following steps can be taken to avoid or reduce such behaviors in internet enterprises.

(1) Promote the social responsibility consciousness of internet enterprise. Ideology often determines behavior choice. Internet enterprises must realize the importance of corporate social responsibility and integrate corporate social responsibility awareness into corporate culture to better promote the consistency between their words and deeds.

(2) Improve the supervision ability of internet enterprises themselves. The rapid development of enterprises often leads to problems of management loopholes and insufficient management capacity. Internet enterprises need to timely improve their own management level and achieve self-inspection to prevent the occurrence of related problems.

(3) Innovate the profit mode. Internet enterprises should change the concept that economic interests and social responsibility are contradictory. Innovate or improve the profit model so that their economic interests and social responsibility practice can coexist harmoniously.

4.2. Effective Supervision from Social Media

At present, the forms of corporate hypocrisy in the Internet enterprises are various, many of which have a high degree of concealment, which makes many internet enterprises willing to take risks to implement "hypocritical strategies". But the attention of social media will make such behaviors impossible to hide, increase the error cost and perceived risks of internet enterprises, thus effectively inhibiting the hypocritical behavior of internet enterprises. Therefore, this paper suggests that, (1) Increase publicity and reports on the concept of corporate social responsibility to help all social sectors to identify the real corporate social responsibility behavior and the corresponding corporate hypocrisy. (2) Social media increases the attention and exposure to hypocritical behaviors of internet enterprises from the perspective of social responsibility. (3) Establish a social responsibility rating mechanism for internet enterprises, such as the establishment of red (good) and black (bad) list of internet enterprises. (4) Timely receive and respond to accusations of internet enterprises' hypocrisy in CSR from consumers, employees or trade unions.

4.3. Effective Punishment from the Government

The Internet era has spawned a variety of internet enterprises, and their innovative business methods often make Internet enterprises involve some areas with unclear legal definition. Sometimes internet enterprises that are eager to succeed do not hesitate to step on the legal "red line". Therefore, in order to effectively control this kind of behaviors, the government needs a strong punishment, which can be done from the following aspects:

(1) Establish and improve relevant laws and regulations. Considering the novelty and extensive distribution of internet enterprises' business, the government should timely improve various laws and regulations, and try to be as specific as possible, so as to avoid Internet enterprises from getting around the ban.

(2) Improve the corresponding anonymous reporting mechanism. The government needs to provide anonymous reporting channels for the public or social media, and make timely responses and feedback, so as to increase the deterrent force for enterprises.

5. CONCLUSION

To sum up, compared with traditional enterprises, internet enterprises tend to have greater information dissemination and stronger social influence. Therefore, the practice of social responsibility of internet enterprises has also been highly concerned by the academia and all social sectors. However, due to the lack of motivation and inadequate supervision, many internet enterprises have been exposed for their hypocritical behaviors on social responsibility. This kind of behavior is manifested in various forms, mainly including four typical modes, inadequate supervision, profit of inductivity, false propaganda and violation of laws and lawbreaking behavior. These hypocritical behaviors of internet enterprises from the perspective of social responsibility will have different degrees of adverse effects on users, employees and even the public of internet enterprises, which will harm social interests and also harm the sustainable development of enterprises. Therefore, this paper proposes to establish a triangular control mechanism from the perspectives of enterprise, society and government, so as to effectively prevent and control hypocritical behaviors of internet enterprises concerning social responsibility practices.

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