

From Exposure to Orders: Optimizing Douyin Live-Streaming Conversion through Standardized Operations and CTA Design in a Regional Bakery SME

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ABSTRACT

Douyin live-streaming commerce has become an important channel for regional small and medium-sized enterprises to reach customers, display products, and generate online sales. However, attracting viewers into a live-stream room does not necessarily lead to completed orders. Many firms continue to face a practical conversion gap, where online exposure is achieved but viewer retention, product clicks, add-to-cart behaviour, and final purchase outcomes remain unstable. This paper discusses how Douyin live-streaming conversion can be improved through standardized live-streaming operations and structured call-to-action design. Drawing on the context of Siwei Te Foods Ltd., a regional bakery SME, the paper adopts conversion rate performance as the key outcome and reviews the role of live-stream SOPs, product selection, CTA display, brand building, market positioning, and marketing channel integration in shaping viewer movement from exposure to order. The StreamFlow Blueprint is discussed as an operational approach for stabilising live-stream preparation, session flow, role allocation, and post-stream review, while ActionPulse is positioned as a practical mechanism for guiding CTA timing and purchase prompts. By linking internal live-streaming routines with observable conversion outcomes, this paper contributes to digital marketing and social commerce literature and offers practical implications for SMEs seeking to strengthen online sales performance on platform-based live-streaming channels.

Keywords: Douyin live streaming, online conversion, conversion rate performance, live-stream SOPs, CTA design, StreamFlow Blueprint, ActionPulse, SME bakery

INTRODUCTION

Douyin live-streaming commerce has become an important digital selling channel in China, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises seeking to reach consumers beyond traditional offline stores. By combining product display, real-time interaction, short-video traffic and instant purchasing functions, Douyin allows firms to promote products and complete transactions within the same platform environment (Ding et al., 2025). For regional bakery businesses, live streaming provides a useful opportunity to present product freshness, introduce promotional offers and communicate directly with potential customers.

However, online traffic does not always result in successful conversion. Many live-streaming businesses are able to attract viewers into the live room, but only a small proportion of them continue to product clicks, add-to-cart behaviour or completed orders (Qing, 2025). This problem is especially important for SMEs, where live-streaming activities are often carried out without clear operating procedures, stable product presentation or consistent call-to-action design. As a result, live-stream performance may become highly dependent on individual anchors and difficult to repeat across sessions.

In the case of Siwei Te Foods Ltd., Douyin functions as both a promotional channel and a sales channel. Although the company has an existing offline customer base, its online conversion performance remains unstable. This

suggests that the challenge is not simply to increase viewer traffic, but to improve how live-streaming activities are planned, delivered and reviewed (Attar et al., 2022). Standardized live-stream operations and clearer CTA design are therefore important for helping viewers move from initial exposure to actual orders.

This paper discusses how Douyin live-streaming conversion can be optimized through the StreamFlow Blueprint SOP and ActionPulse approach. It focuses on conversion rate performance as the key outcome and examines how live-stream SOPs, product selection, CTA display, brand building, market positioning and marketing channel integration influence the viewer journey. By linking internal live-streaming routines with observable conversion outcomes, this paper provides both theoretical and practical insights for regional bakery SMEs seeking to improve online sales performance in platform-based commerce.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Douyin Live-Streaming Commerce

Social commerce has changed the way firms interact with consumers and conduct online selling (Attar et al., 2022). Unlike traditional e-commerce, which mainly depends on product pages, search functions and customer reviews, social commerce places greater emphasis on interaction, content sharing and social influence. Consumers are no longer only receivers of product information. They also participate in the selling process through comments, likes, sharing, reviews and real-time communication with sellers (Ko & Ho, 2024). This makes social commerce a more interactive and relationship-based form of digital business.

Live-streaming commerce is one of the most active forms of social commerce. It combines product display, entertainment, real-time interaction and instant purchasing functions in one online setting. Through live streaming, sellers can introduce products, demonstrate product use, answer viewers' questions and guide consumers to purchase directly through platform links (Ko & Ho, 2024). Previous studies have shown that live streaming can influence consumers' purchase intention by increasing social presence, trust, engagement and perceived product value.

In China, Douyin has become an important platform for live-streaming commerce. Its short-video traffic, algorithmic recommendation and integrated transaction functions allow firms to reach potential customers quickly. For small and medium-sized enterprises, Douyin provides a lower-cost channel to promote products beyond physical store locations. This is particularly useful for regional bakery firms, because live streaming can visually present product freshness, packaging, taste appeal and seasonal promotions (Kahveci, 2025). However, Douyin also creates a highly competitive environment. Viewers can enter and leave live rooms within seconds, and many sellers compete for the same consumer attention. Therefore, live-streaming success depends not only on whether viewers enter the room, but also on whether the live-streaming process can keep them interested and guide them toward purchase (Duong et al., 2025).

Conversion Rate Performance

Marketing performance has traditionally been measured through financial indicators such as sales growth, revenue, profit and return on investment. In digital marketing, however, performance is also evaluated through process-based indicators that show how customers move through the online journey (Ko & Ho, 2024). These indicators include traffic, viewer retention, engagement rate, click-through rate, add-to-cart rate and order conversion rate. Among these measures, conversion rate is especially important because it connects online marketing activity with actual customer action.

In live-streaming commerce, conversion rate performance refers to the ability of a live-streaming session to turn viewers into buyers (Kolbeinsson et al., 2022). A live room may attract a large number of viewers, but high traffic does not necessarily mean successful sales performance. If viewers leave quickly, do not interact, ignore product links or fail to place orders, the commercial value of the session remains limited. Therefore, conversion rate provides a more meaningful indicator than traffic alone. It reflects whether live-streaming content, product presentation and purchasing prompts are effective in moving viewers from attention to action.

The AIDA model provides a useful explanation of this process. In a Douyin live-streaming session, unique viewers represent the attention stage, retention reflects the movement from attention to interest, engagement indicates growing desire, while CTA response and completed orders represent action. This means that order conversion is not an isolated result, but the final outcome of several connected stages (Cai, 2025). Weakness at any stage may reduce the final conversion rate. For example, poor opening content may reduce retention, unclear product explanation may weaken desire, and inconsistent CTA prompts may prevent viewers from clicking or purchasing.

For Siwei Te Foods Ltd., conversion rate performance is the key outcome because the company's Douyin live streaming is expected to generate real business results, not only online visibility. As a regional bakery SME, the firm operates in a market where many products are similar in price and function. In such a context, improving conversion requires more than attracting viewers. It requires a clear live-streaming structure, focused product communication and repeated guidance that helps viewers understand what to buy, why to buy and when to act (Xu et al., 2020).

Standardized Operations and CTA Design in Douyin Conversion

Existing studies on live-streaming commerce have examined host characteristics, interaction quality, social presence, trust and promotional tactics. These factors are important, but they do not fully explain how firms manage live streaming as an internal operating process. In practice, many SMEs conduct live streaming in an informal way (Hasman et al., 2023). Session flow, product order, anchor language, interaction timing and CTA prompts may vary from one session to another. This makes live-streaming performance unstable and difficult to improve systematically.

Standard operating procedures provide a practical way to reduce this problem. SOPs are written instructions that define how repeated tasks should be performed. In live-streaming commerce, SOPs can cover pre-stream preparation, in-stream execution and post-stream review. Before the session, the firm can decide the product list, promotion focus, anchor script, role allocation and stock arrangement. During the session, the SOP can guide opening hooks, product demonstration sequence, interaction checkpoints and CTA timing. After the session, the team can review traffic, retention, engagement, clicks, add-to-cart behaviour and orders. Through this process, live streaming becomes a repeatable and measurable business activity rather than a temporary promotional effort.

In this study, the StreamFlow Blueprint is positioned as a standardized live-streaming SOP for Siwei Te Foods Ltd. Its purpose is to help the company create a stable live-streaming routine, clarify team responsibilities and connect daily actions with conversion indicators. By standardizing the live-streaming process, the company can reduce dependence on individual anchors and improve consistency across sessions. This is especially important for SMEs, where limited staff and resources often make systematic management difficult.

Product selection and CTA display are also important in shaping conversion performance (Lee et al., 2022). In bakery live streaming, too many products may confuse viewers and weaken purchase intention. A focused product selection strategy allows the seller to highlight key items, such as hero products, seasonal products, promotional bundles or visually attractive bakery items. When products are clearly selected and repeatedly explained, viewers are more likely to understand the value of the offer.

CTA design further connects product interest with purchase action. A call to action reminds viewers to click the product link, add the item to cart or complete the order. In live streaming, CTA prompts need to be clear, timely and consistent. If CTAs are delivered too late, viewers may leave before taking action. If they are delivered too vaguely, viewers may not know what to do next. The ActionPulse approach is therefore used to structure CTA timing and wording. It supports the movement from interest and desire to action by placing purchasing prompts at suitable moments in the live-streaming process.

Brand building, market positioning and marketing channel integration also influence conversion. A regional bakery brand needs to communicate not only product price, but also freshness, reliability, local identity and product value. If the brand message is unclear, viewers may find it difficult to distinguish the firm from other bakery sellers on Douyin. Similarly, market positioning helps the firm decide which products to highlight and

how to present them to the target audience. Douyin should also be integrated with the firm's offline stores and wider marketing channels, so that online exposure can support both digital and physical sales (Lee et al., 2022).

Overall, the literature suggests that Douyin conversion is shaped by both operational and marketing factors. Standardized live-streaming operations provide the internal structure for consistent execution, while CTA design, product selection and brand communication guide the customer's response during the live session. For Siwei Te Foods Ltd., the combination of the StreamFlow Blueprint and ActionPulse offers a practical way to link internal live-streaming routines with observable conversion outcomes.

CONCLUSION

As discussed in the literature, live-streaming commerce has become an important part of social commerce, particularly in platform-based markets such as Douyin. Previous studies have shown that online selling performance is no longer determined only by product availability or platform traffic. Instead, it is shaped by how firms attract viewers, maintain their attention, present product value, encourage interaction, and guide consumers toward purchase behaviour. Therefore, conversion rate performance provides a suitable outcome for examining whether live-streaming activities can turn online exposure into completed orders.

In the context of this paper, Douyin live-streaming conversion is understood as both an operational issue and a marketing communication issue (Chen et al., 2022). For Siwei Te Foods Ltd., the challenge is not simply to increase the number of viewers entering the live room, but to improve the process through which viewers move from attention to interest, desire, and action. This makes standardized live-streaming operations and CTA design important areas of discussion. The StreamFlow Blueprint provides a practical foundation for organising live-stream preparation, session flow, role allocation, product presentation, and post-stream review. Meanwhile, ActionPulse supports the timing and wording of CTA prompts so that viewers receive clearer guidance at the point where purchase action is expected.

In sum, the discussion suggests that improving online conversion requires a more systematic approach to Douyin live-streaming management. Live-stream SOPs can reduce inconsistency and dependence on individual anchors, while structured product selection and CTA display can make the purchasing path clearer for viewers (Malhotra, 2024). Brand building, market positioning, and channel integration also play important roles because they help the firm communicate a more recognisable identity and strengthen the connection between online exposure and actual sales outcomes.

This paper contributes to digital marketing and social commerce literature by linking internal live-streaming routines with observable conversion outcomes. It also provides practical guidance for regional bakery SMEs that aim to use Douyin not only as a promotional tool, but also as a performance-oriented sales channel. Future studies may further examine how standardized operations, CTA design, and brand positioning influence conversion performance across different product categories, firm sizes, and live-streaming platforms.

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