



**A STUDY OF THE MARKETING STRATEGIES OF APPLE INC. IN THE
CHINESE MARKET**

ZHIYUAN HAO
6517195406

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
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ZHIYUAN HAO

This Independent Study Has Been Approved as a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

Advisor.....

(Dr. ZHANG LI)

Date:1...../.....8...../2025.....

.....
(Associate Professor Dr. Jomphong Mongkhonvanit)
Dean, Graduate School of Business

Date.....21...../.....8...../2025.....

Title: A Study of the Marketing Strategies of Apple Inc. in the Chinese Market
Researcher: Zhiyuan Hao
Degree: Master of Business Administration
Major: International Business Management

Advisor:

(Dr.ZHANGLI)

ABSTRACT

With increasing competition in China's consumer electronics market, understanding the impact of marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behavior is crucial. Apple Inc. employs a distinct approach, leveraging product innovation, premium pricing, diverse distribution channels, and targeted promotions. However, the effectiveness of these strategies in influencing consumer behavior requires further empirical investigation.

This study aimed to examine the impact of Apple's 4Ps marketing strategy—product, pricing, place, and promotion—on consumer purchasing behavior in China. The research objective was to investigate how these four strategies collectively influence consumer purchasing behavior.

A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a structured questionnaire to collect data. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed, with 452 collected and 17 deemed invalid. Ultimately, 435 valid questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis to assess the relationships between Apple's marketing strategies and consumer purchasing behavior.

The findings revealed that all four strategies significantly influenced consumer purchasing behavior. Place strategy had the strongest impact, highlighting the importance of Apple's retail and e-commerce presence. Product strategy also played a key role, with consumers valuing innovation, quality, and ecosystem integration.

Pricing and promotion strategies had a moderate but significant impact, reflecting Apple's ability to maintain a premium image while leveraging promotional activities.

In conclusion, the study confirms the effectiveness of Apple's 4Ps marketing strategy in shaping consumer behavior in China. To sustain its competitive edge, Apple should continue innovating, refine pricing strategies for different segments, expand its retail presence, and enhance localized promotions. These insights provide valuable guidance for multinational firms optimizing their strategies in China's dynamic market.

Keywords: Apple Inc., 4Ps marketing strategy, consumer purchasing behavior, Chinese market



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ZHIYUAN HAO

DECLARATION

I, HAOZHIYUAN, hereby declare that this Independent Study entitled “A Study of the Marketing Strategies of Apple Inc. in the Chinese Market” is an original work and has never been submitted to any academic institution for a degree.

(HAOZHIYUAN)

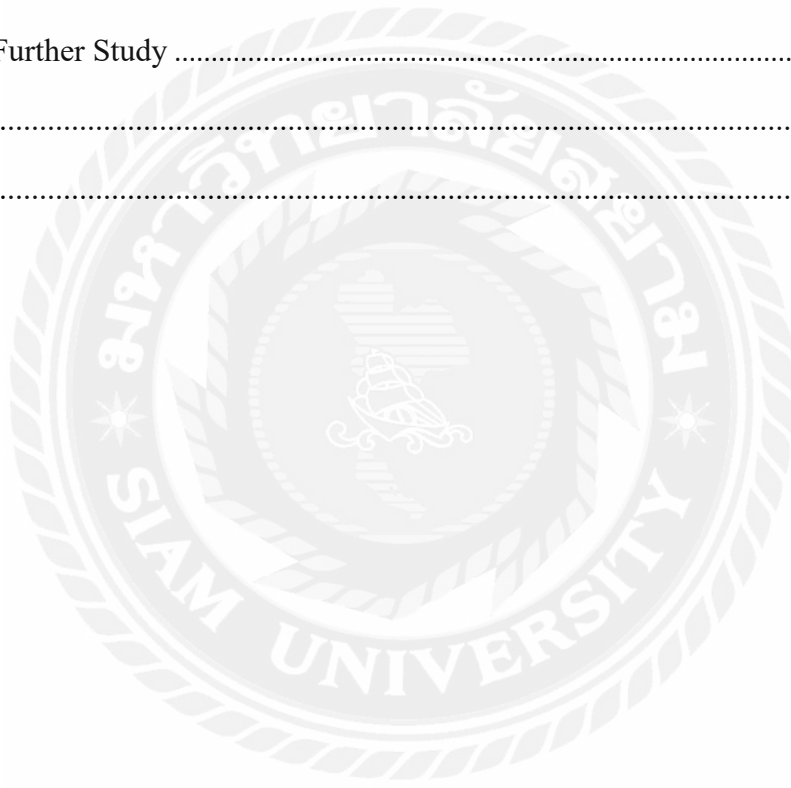
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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent years, driven by the rapid advancement of global mobile communication technology and the rise of China's digital economy, the smartphone industry has entered a phase of intense competition. China, as one of the largest consumer electronics markets, has become a strategic battleground for global technology brands. According to Zhang (2023), global smartphone shipments were estimated to reach 1.85 billion units by the end of 2023, with China contributing a significant share. Domestic brands such as Huawei, Xiaomi, OPPO, and vivo have rapidly expanded their market presence by leveraging competitive pricing, localized innovation, and digital-first marketing strategies. In the high-end segment, although Apple retains a leading position, Huawei briefly surpassed Apple in 2019, marking a rare breakthrough by a Chinese brand (Liu, 2024). These developments highlight a major shift in consumer behavior and brand preference, reflecting the importance of adapting marketing strategies to local cultural and economic contexts. Without timely localization, multinational brands risk losing relevance and consumer loyalty in an increasingly dynamic market landscape.

Apple's core brand principles—Empathy, Focus, and Impute—are rooted in its marketing strategy and were proposed by early executive Mike Markkula. These principles continue to guide Apple's global branding, communication, and retail strategy, helping the company maintain a consistent brand image while fostering emotional connections with consumers (Cai & Chen, 2024). Apple is positioned as a premium brand targeting middle- to high-income users, particularly young professionals and technology enthusiasts (Li, 2023). As of 2023, Apple's brand value reached \$880.5 billion, making it one of the most valuable brands globally (Cai & Chen, 2024).

In Apple's international expansion, China represents a critical market due to its vast consumer base and rapidly evolving digital economy. Since entering China in 2009, Apple has made considerable progress, particularly after the success of the iPhone 4, which helped establish its premium image among Chinese consumers (Zhang, 2023;

Lu, 2022). Nevertheless, the company has faced significant challenges related to localization, competition, and policy constraints.

Chinese smartphone brands such as Huawei, Xiaomi, OPPO, and Vivo have risen rapidly by offering competitive pricing, robust distribution networks, and marketing strategies tailored to local consumer behavior (Lan, 2021; Pereira et al., 2022). Compared to these local competitors, Apple has been relatively slow to adapt to local marketing trends such as livestream selling, social e-commerce, and KOL (key opinion leader) marketing (Pham, 2024).

Moreover, Apple's high-end pricing strategy has become less competitive as Chinese brands improve product quality and offer better value-for-money (Lai, 2021; Shi, 2021). Declining brand loyalty and lengthened consumer upgrade cycles have further impacted Apple's sales performance (e Cunha, 2021). Additionally, China's tightening data governance policies and the broader geopolitical tensions between China and the U.S. have introduced further uncertainty to Apple's long-term operations in the market (He, 2024; Lan, 2021).

In summary, while Apple's marketing strategies in China has achieved certain successes, it still faces multiple challenges, including intensified market competition, evolving regulatory policies, and shifting consumer behavior. The critical issues influencing Apple's long-term growth in the Chinese market lie in how it can optimize its product strategies, adjust its pricing models, improve distribution channels, and enhance promotional approaches—that is, address each dimension of the 4Ps marketing mix. This study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the optimization paths for Apple's marketing strategy in China by drawing on quantitative research into consumer behavior, offering insights into how Apple might refine its marketing approach to ensure sustainable development in the Chinese market.

1.2 Questions of the Study

Understanding consumer purchasing behavior is crucial for businesses seeking to enhance their market performance. The decision-making process of consumers is often

influenced by various marketing strategies, including product, pricing, place, and promotion strategies. These four elements, commonly referred to as the marketing mix (4Ps), play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences and purchase decisions. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of these strategies on consumer purchasing behavior by addressing the following research questions:

1. Does product strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?
2. Does pricing strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?
3. Does place strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?
4. Does promotion strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of product strategy on consumer purchasing behavior.
2. To examine the impact of pricing strategy on consumer purchasing behavior.
3. To examine the impact of place strategy on consumer purchasing behavior.
4. To examine the impact of promotion strategy on consumer purchasing behavior.

1.4 Scope of the Study

1.4.1 Scope of Content

This study focuses on Apple's marketing strategies in the Chinese market, systematically analyzing key areas including brand marketing, product strategy, pricing, and channel distribution. The primary objective of this research is to examine how Apple's marketing strategies influence Chinese consumers' brand positioning, purchasing behavior, and brand loyalty, and to propose optimization recommendations to enhance its competitiveness and market penetration in China.

The study used a survey research method to systematically evaluate Apple's market strategies. By incorporating consumer feedback, it assessed the effectiveness of these strategies in brand development, product localization, price acceptance, and channel distribution. This research was limited to analyzing Apple's market model in China and its optimization strategies, excluding the market strategies of other brands, to ensure the study's focus and depth.

1.4.2 Scope of Population

The population of this study was Apple users in the Chinese market, covering first-tier, new first-tier, and select second-tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Hangzhou, and Nanjing, to ensure the representativeness of the data. The selection of Apple users from these cities was based on the following considerations:

1. The primary consumer base of Apple products is mainly concentrated in economically developed cities, where brand awareness of Apple is high, which facilitates the analysis of the market impact of its marketing strategies.
2. Consumers in these regions possess relatively strong purchasing power, providing more valuable data to analyze the relationship between Apple's high-end pricing strategy and market acceptance.

Apple's marketing activities (such as brand promotion and channel development) are more concentrated in these regions, which more effectively reflect the impact of Apple's marketing strategies on consumers.

This study employed a random sampling method and calculated the minimum sample size using the Yamane formula ($n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$) to ensure the scientific rigor and representativeness of the data. Based on the formula, at least 400 valid questionnaires were required for analysis. To account for potential invalid responses due to errors or missing data, the study initially distributed 500 questionnaires. In practice, a total of 452 questionnaires were collected, of which 17 were identified as

invalid. Ultimately, 435 valid questionnaires were obtained, which were further analyzed to derive meaningful insights.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The intensification of global competition and the diversification of consumer markets have made the marketing strategies of global enterprises in local markets a focal point of attention for both academia and industry. In recent years, research on the marketing strategies of international brands in the Chinese market has become increasingly abundant. Scholars have explored how global enterprises adjust their marketing strategies to enhance market competitiveness from various perspectives, including market adaptability, brand positioning, consumer behavior, and digital marketing models. However, existing studies have mostly focused on individual dimensions of marketing strategies (such as pricing, branding, or channels), with limited research conducted from the perspective of integrated marketing strategies that combine consumer behavior, market competition, and corporate strategic adjustments in a systematic manner (Zhang, 2023). Therefore, this study focuses on the marketing strategies of Apple Inc. in the Chinese market, aiming to fill the gaps in existing research and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the marketing optimization of global enterprises in local markets.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

The STP strategy (Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning) and the 4Ps marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) form the foundation of a company's competitive marketing strategies. However, as local market environments become increasingly complex, multinational corporations' marketing strategies must strike a balance between global brand standardization and local market adaptation. While existing research has examined the market adaptation strategies of international brands, there remains a gap in studies regarding how the marketing mix influences consumer purchasing decisions and brand loyalty (Li, 2023).

Through a comprehensive analysis, this research not only enriches the academic framework of localized marketing strategies for multinational enterprises, but also

expands the intersection of consumer behavior and marketing theory. It offers practical research perspectives for future scholars.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

In the context of increasingly intense global competition in the technology market, the Chinese market has become a critical battleground for multinational technology brands. However, in recent years, the rise of domestic brands, changes in consumer demand, and the uncertainty surrounding the policy environment have presented unprecedented challenges for multinational companies' marketing strategies in China. Although Apple maintains a significant market share in China, its brand loyalty, market penetration, and marketing adaptability are facing fierce competition from local brands (Lan, 2021).

This study holds practical significance by systematically evaluating the effectiveness of Apple's marketing strategies, including brand communication, market promotion, channel management, and pricing strategies, through literature analysis and consumer surveys. It aims to identify the limitations of these strategies and offer recommendations for optimization. First, the study analyzes whether Apple's brand marketing strategy aligns with the needs of Chinese consumers and assesses the effectiveness of emerging digital marketing methods, such as short video marketing, social e-commerce (e.g., live-streaming sales), and KOL (Key Opinion Leader) marketing. Second, focusing on Apple's premium pricing strategy, it explores its impact on consumers' brand perception and purchase intention, while providing recommendations on how to optimize the pricing system to enhance market acceptance. Finally, the study compares Apple's marketing strategies with those of domestic brands (e.g., Huawei, Xiaomi), drawing insights from their successful experiences to identify potential pathways for optimizing Apple's marketing strategy in the Chinese market.

Furthermore, the value of this study extends beyond Apple Inc. itself. The findings can also offer valuable insights for other multinational brands operating in the Chinese market, particularly in sectors such as luxury goods, consumer electronics, and automotive industries, where competition from domestic brands is growing. By optimizing marketing models, leveraging digital marketing strategies, and refining

brand communication approaches, multinational companies can more effectively adapt to the Chinese market, thereby enhancing their brand influence and market competitiveness.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Apple Inc.

Apple Inc. is a globally leading technology company headquartered in Cupertino, California, USA. It primarily manufactures smartphones, personal computers, tablets, wearable devices, and related software and services. Its core products include the iPhone, Mac, iPad, Apple Watch, and the iOS ecosystem.

2. Marketing Strategy

Marketing strategy refers to a systematic plan through which businesses attract consumers, increase market share, and enhance brand influence by analyzing the market, selecting target markets, and implementing a marketing mix strategy (4Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion). In this study, the marketing strategy mainly focuses on Apple Inc.'s product positioning, pricing strategy, distribution channels, and promotional tactics in the Chinese market.

3. Product Strategy

Product strategy refers to a company's market decisions concerning product development, design, positioning, functionality, and user experience (Singh & Jena, 2024). Apple's product strategy encompasses innovative product design, ecosystem integration (such as the synergy between iOS and macOS), and high-end brand positioning. In this study, the dimensions of product strategy measured include product quality, innovation, design, ecosystem integration, and product line diversity.

4. Pricing Strategy

Pricing strategy involves a company's process of setting product prices based on factors such as market demand, competitive conditions, cost structure, and consumer perceived value (Czinkota et al., 2021). Apple Inc. employs a premium pricing strategy and a skimming pricing strategy, which entails setting a high price during the initial

product launch to maintain brand value and profitability. This study measures the dimensions of pricing strategy, including price fairness, brand premium acceptance, installment payment plans, and trade-in programs.

5. Place Strategy

Place strategy refers to the methods by which companies deliver products or services to end consumers through various distribution channels (Dermawan et al., 2023). In the Chinese market, Apple employs a multi-channel approach, including flagship stores (Apple Stores), authorized resellers, e-commerce platforms (such as Tmall and JD.com), and carrier partnerships. This study evaluates the dimensions of place strategy, including channel accessibility, the experience of online and offline sales channels, retail store service quality, and consumer purchase convenience.

6. Promotion Strategy

Promotion strategy refers to how companies communicate brand value and encourage purchasing behavior through advertising, public relations, discounts, social media marketing, and other methods (Hanaysha, 2021). Apple's promotional strategy in the Chinese market includes brand storytelling, scarcity marketing, social media marketing (such as Weibo and Douyin), KOL and celebrity endorsements, among others. This study assesses the dimensions of promotion strategy, including brand communication, the impact of product launch events, promotional offers, social media exposure, and word-of-mouth marketing.

7. Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Consumer purchasing behavior refers to the decision-making process that consumers undergo when making purchasing decisions, including brand awareness, purchase intention, loyalty, and the final purchasing decision (Tali et al., 2021). In this study, consumer purchasing behavior is the dependent variable, measured through several dimensions, including consumers' purchase history, future purchase intentions, willingness to recommend the brand, loyalty, and the influence of promotional strategies.

8. 4Ps Marketing Mix

The 4Ps marketing mix theory, introduced by McCarthy, consists of Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, and is used to analyze how businesses can optimize their market competitiveness through the marketing mix. This study, based on the 4Ps framework, examines Apple's marketing strategies in the Chinese market and their impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

9. Localization Marketing

Localization marketing refers to the adjustment of marketing strategies, including brand communication, product functionality, pricing, and sales channels, to fit the culture, consumer habits, and market competition of a specific market (e.g., the Chinese market) (Okonkwo et al., 2023). Apple's localization strategies in the Chinese market include integration with local payment systems (such as Alipay and WeChat Pay), localized advertising campaigns, and the optimization of local customer service.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter reviews the literature on Apple's marketing strategies in the Chinese market, providing a theoretical foundation for the study. It is organized as follows:

2.1 Overview of Apple Inc.

2.2 Literature Review

2.3 Theory Review

2.4 Research Relevant

2.5 Conceptual Framework

2.1 Overview of Apple Inc.

Apple Inc., a global leader in technology, holds a dominant market position in smart devices, computer software, and online services. Headquartered in Cupertino, California, the company has consistently driven innovation through an "innovation-driven" strategy, building a highly loyal customer base with its iconic product design, integrated ecosystem, and strong brand influence (Sangari et al., 2015). Since its founding in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne (Rao, 2025), Apple has expanded its product portfolio to include the iPhone, iPad, Mac, and Apple Watch, supported by a seamless ecosystem of iOS, macOS, iCloud, and the App Store. Apple's vision- "technology is most powerful when it empowers everyone"- and its mission to "keep everyone connected" reflect its commitment to enabling users worldwide to engage with cutting-edge technology through high-quality products and services.

In the context of increasingly intense global market competition, Apple's success in the Chinese market is not coincidental but rather the result of the synergistic effects of multiple strategies. The company has established several objectives in its market operations, including technological innovation, shareholder returns, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and sustainability, which allow it to maintain a balanced approach

between business value and social responsibility (Sangari et al., 2015). From the VRIO framework (Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Organized), Apple's core competitive advantages are primarily reflected in the following areas: brand reputation, minimalist product strategy, a loyal user community, and an efficient marketing system. First, Apple has built high brand recognition in the Chinese market, with many consumers perceiving Apple products as symbols of cutting-edge technology and superior user experience. Additionally, some users attribute a certain social identity value to Apple products (Peer Effect), using them to express their social status and taste (Cantrell et al., 2017). However, in recent years, the rise of domestic brands such as Huawei has challenged Apple's market dominance. Some consumers have raised concerns about Apple's pace of product innovation and are calling for more groundbreaking technological advancements (Cantrell et al., 2017).

Additionally, Apple adopts a streamlined product line strategy, which provides it with a unique advantage in product development and market promotion. Compared to domestic competitors like Huawei, which employ a multi-model, multi-price product strategy, Apple releases only 1 to 3 iPhone models each year, allowing its research and development resources to be focused, ensuring product quality and optimization of the user experience (Katsikeas et al., 2016). This strategy enables Apple to effectively maintain its high-end brand image and further enhance the premium capability of its products. However, this approach also somewhat limits its market coverage, particularly in the mid-to-low-end market, where Apple's market share is pressured by local brands such as Huawei and Xiaomi. Moreover, due to its relatively high pricing, some consumers adopt a cautious attitude towards Apple's pricing strategy, believing that the company has not fully accounted for the diverse needs of the Chinese market in its product pricing (Katsikeas et al., 2016).

Finally, Apple places significant emphasis on building its user community to enhance brand loyalty and customer retention. The company has developed a comprehensive Apple Ecosystem, ensuring seamless integration between devices and providing users with a consistent experience across various platforms (Lu et al., 2023). This ecosystem not only includes hardware devices such as the iPhone, iPad, and Mac, but also incorporates software and cloud services like iOS, iCloud, and the App Store,

creating a highly integrated user experience that further strengthens user reliance on the brand. Additionally, Apple continuously improves customer satisfaction through regular product updates, enhanced after-sales services, and the AppleCare+ extended warranty plan, thereby maintaining its market competitiveness (Labib, 2023). However, in recent years, domestic brands such as Huawei and Xiaomi have also been actively building their own ecosystems to capture and retain loyal user bases. Therefore, as Apple progresses, it must further refine its localization strategies to adapt to the rapid changes in the Chinese market and ensure its long-term competitive advantage in the premium smart device sector.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Apple Inc.'s Marketing Strategies

As a global leader in technology, Apple Inc.'s marketing strategies have been a central focus of both academic and business communities. Research indicates that Apple's marketing model demonstrates distinctiveness in several areas, including product strategy, pricing models, brand management, channel development, and advertising communication, achieving remarkable performance in global markets (Lan, 2021). However, due to differing consumer demands and competitive conditions across markets—particularly in the highly competitive Chinese market—Apple must continuously adjust and refine its marketing strategies to sustain its brand competitiveness and market share (He, 2024).

In recent years, global academic research has generally affirmed that Apple's successful marketing strategy primarily hinges on three critical factors: Premium Positioning, Ecosystem Integration, and Innovation-Driven Marketing (Qian, 2024). These strategies have not only allowed Apple to build a stable and loyal customer base but also enabled it to sustain a leading position in the global technology industry.

Firstly, premium brand positioning is one of the core elements of Apple Inc.'s marketing strategy. Apple has consistently pursued a high-end brand strategy, cultivating its brand image through innovative products, exceptional user experiences, and brand storytelling (Cai & Chen, 2024). Apple's brand communication strategy emphasizes minimalism, technological innovation, and emotional engagement, with the

"Think Different" advertising campaign becoming a symbol of Apple's brand ethos, further reinforcing consumer affinity with the brand (Hsu et al., 2022). This strategy not only enhances Apple's brand premium but also enables it to maintain a distinctive position in the highly competitive smartphone and electronics market.

Secondly, ecosystem integration is one of Apple Inc.'s critical strategies for enhancing user loyalty. Apple has successfully developed an integrated product ecosystem that combines hardware and software, including devices such as the iPhone, iPad, Mac, and Apple Watch, and deeply integrates with software and service platforms like iOS, the App Store, and iCloud (Nouri & Aghabi, 2024). This closed ecosystem has significantly strengthened consumer loyalty to the Apple brand, encouraging users to consistently choose Apple products when upgrading or replacing devices. Furthermore, Apple's ecosystem has effectively enhanced cross-product synergy, such as when users purchase an iPhone, which increases the likelihood of subsequent purchases of accessories like AirPods and the Apple Watch, thereby driving an increase in overall market share (Chen et al., 2021).

Finally, the innovation-driven strategy has consistently been a core competitive advantage of Apple's marketing approach. Apple continually introduces groundbreaking products with pioneering technologies, such as the M1/M2 chips, Face ID, and Retina displays, which allow its products to maintain a leading position in the industry (Li, 2023). Moreover, Apple's product design philosophy prioritizes Minimalism and User Experience Optimization, which makes its products uniquely competitive in the global market (GHAR, 2024). This innovation-focused strategy not only enhances the attractiveness of Apple's products but also ensures the brand's sustained dominance in the technology sector.

Overall, Apple's marketing strategy success in the global market can be systematically analyzed through the 4Ps Marketing Model (Product, Price, Place, Promotion). By leveraging premium brand positioning, a closed ecosystem, and continuous technological innovation, Apple has not only enhanced its product competitiveness but also established a robust brand influence worldwide. Given the

challenges posed by various markets, Apple must continuously adjust its marketing strategy to maintain its long-term competitive advantage, as illustrated in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 4Ps Marketing Model Analysis

Marketing Elements (4Ps)	Global Market Strategy
Product Strategy (Product)	Technological innovation, ecosystem integration, and superior user experience
Pricing Strategy (Price)	Premium pricing strategy, market segmentation (e.g., iPhone SE vs. iPhone Pro)
Place Strategy (Place)	Direct retail stores, e-commerce platforms, carrier channels, and optimization of the global supply chain
Promotion Strategy (Promotion)	Brand storytelling, social media marketing, Apple Events, and celebrity endorsements

In conclusion, Apple Inc.'s global marketing strategies primarily focus on premium brand positioning, ecosystem integration, and innovation-driven initiatives. These core strategies have not only enabled Apple to establish a strong brand image and cultivate customer loyalty but also helped it maintain a leading position in a highly competitive market. From the perspective of the 4Ps marketing theory, Apple has developed its product strategy through technological innovation and an exceptional user experience, implemented a premium pricing strategy for market segmentation, optimized its global supply chain through direct retail stores, e-commerce platforms, and carrier channels, and reinforced brand communication through brand storytelling, social media marketing, and Apple Events. Notably, in the increasingly competitive Chinese market, Apple must continually adjust its marketing strategies to adapt to local consumer demands and market conditions in order to solidify its market share and sustain its competitive advantage.

2.2.2 Marketing Strategy of Apple Inc. in the Chinese Market

As a global leader in technology, Apple Inc. has adhered to an innovation-driven development strategy since entering the Chinese market. Despite facing an increasingly competitive environment, the company has consistently relied on precise market positioning and tailored marketing strategies to maintain its leadership in the high-end smartphone sector. Its marketing strategies in China encompass product strategy, pricing strategy, distribution strategy, promotional strategy, and service strategy, all of

which are based on a profound understanding of local consumer needs and an accurate assessment of the competitive landscape (Lu, 2022).

Regarding product strategy, Apple Inc. has established a product ecosystem that integrates hardware and software deeply, which enhances user stickiness. Apple's product ecosystem includes hardware devices such as iPhone, iPad, and Mac, as well as software and services like iOS, iCloud, and the App Store. This creates a highly synchronized ecosystem that makes it difficult for users to disengage from this closed loop (Lu, 2022). Moreover, Apple has entered into a strategic partnership with IBM to expand into the enterprise market, securing a competitive advantage in enterprise application products within the banking, insurance, and financial industries (Zhang, 2023). In contrast to domestic brands that frequently innovate and expand their product lines to cover different consumer segments, Apple has adhered to the principle of a streamlined product line, releasing only a limited number of models to concentrate resources on enhancing product quality and market influence (Cai & Chen, 2024). This strategy not only reduces research and development and marketing costs but also reinforces the brand's high-end positioning.

In terms of pricing strategy, Apple adopts a skimming pricing approach, setting a high initial price for new products to establish a premium brand image. For example, the iPhone 14 Pro Max 1TB version is priced at 13,499 RMB, significantly higher than the average smartphone price in the Chinese market (1,000-3,000 RMB). However, due to its strong brand influence and innovative technology, the product continues to attract a large base of price-insensitive Apple fans (Li, 2023). In addition, Apple implements a trade-in program and price adjustment strategy, encouraging users to upgrade their devices through trade-ins while adjusting the prices of older models after new releases to facilitate inventory clearance and drive sales. This differentiated pricing strategy not only boosts profit margins but also extends the product lifecycle and enhances market penetration.

Regarding channel strategy, Apple has established a multi-layered and multi-touchpoint sales network in the Chinese market, including Apple Stores, official online flagship stores, authorized resellers, and partnerships with telecom operators. As of September 2021, Apple has opened 43 Apple Stores in mainland China. These flagship

stores not only offer product sales but also provide one-on-one training sessions and personalized services to enhance the consumer experience and strengthen brand loyalty (Lu, 2022). Additionally, Apple operates official flagship stores on major e-commerce platforms such as Tmall and JD.com, catering to the growing demand for online shopping. For instance, during the iPhone 13 launch period, Tmall's pre-order volume exceeded 3 million units, while JD.com's pre-orders reached 2 million units, highlighting the increasing significance of online sales channels in Apple's market strategy (Lan, 2021). Furthermore, Apple has formed partnerships with China's three major telecom operators—China Mobile, China Unicom, and China Telecom—to launch customized contract phones, thereby expanding its market reach and solidifying its leadership in the high-end market.

Regarding promotion strategy, Apple strengthens its brand influence and shapes a unique market position through methods such as brand storytelling, hunger marketing, social media marketing, and educational discounts (Lan, 2021). Apple consistently emphasizes the shaping of its brand philosophy. Its "Think Different" brand communication strategy not only highlights minimalist design and technological innovation but also attracts a loyal customer base through emotional resonance (Cai & Chen, 2024). Additionally, Apple employs a hunger marketing strategy by controlling supply to create a perception of market scarcity, thereby increasing product attention and purchase intent. For instance, after new product launches, Apple's official website often sells out quickly, forcing consumers to queue in anticipation, further enhancing the brand's appeal (Khalid & Viktoria, 2023). In social media marketing, Apple leverages new media platforms such as Weibo and Douyin, utilizing KOL (Key Opinion Leader) marketing and celebrity endorsements to amplify brand influence and increase consumer attention towards new products (Chen et al., 2021).

In terms of service strategy, Apple's service system has played a pivotal role in the Chinese market, incorporating AppleCare+ value-added services, ecosystem synergies, and offline experience store services. AppleCare+ strengthens customer loyalty and builds brand trust by offering extended warranties, repair discounts, and other value-added services (Zhang, 2023). Moreover, features like iCloud and AirDrop further enhance seamless connectivity across devices, creating high switching costs for

users when they consider switching brands, which significantly improves customer retention (Cai & Chen, 2024). Additionally, Apple's flagship stores serve not only as product sales centers but also as integral components of the brand experience. Consumers can receive personalized, one-on-one product guidance in-store, thereby enhancing their product usage experience and deepening their emotional connection with the Apple brand.

Overall, Apple's success in the Chinese market is attributed to its precise marketing strategy. Through premium brand positioning, ecosystem integration, skimming pricing, diversified sales channels, and innovative promotional and service systems, Apple has successfully maintained a leading position in a highly competitive market environment. Its flagship stores, e-commerce platforms, and partnerships with telecom operators have created a comprehensive sales network, while social media marketing and hunger marketing strategies have further solidified brand influence. However, in the face of the rapid rise of domestic brands such as Huawei and Xiaomi, Apple must continuously optimize its market strategy to adapt to the fast-changing Chinese market and ensure its sustained competitive advantage in the high-end smartphone market.

2.3 Theory Review

2.3.1 Marketing Mix 4Ps

1) Overview of the 4Ps Marketing Theory

The 4Ps Marketing Theory (Marketing Mix 4Ps), proposed by McCarthy, is one of the most influential theories in marketing research. The theory posits that a company's marketing strategy should revolve around four core elements: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, with systematic marketing mix strategies implemented to enhance market competitiveness (Wickrama, 2022). Research by Sukanta and Muis (2022) further affirms the significant influence of the 4Ps Marketing Theory on consumer purchasing decisions, and its importance is even more pronounced in the digital marketing environment (Sukanta & Muis, 2022). For instance, a study by Dermawan et al. (2023) highlights the broad applicability of the 4Ps Marketing Theory in corporate strategy development and its potential integration with tools such as SWOT analysis to formulate more targeted market strategies (Dermawan et al., 2023). Their

research indicates that the 4Ps marketing strategy not only impacts the market acceptance of products but also determines the growth trajectory of brands under various market conditions. Therefore, in this study, the 4Ps Marketing Theory serves as the primary theoretical framework for analyzing Apple's marketing model and its impact in the Chinese market.

2) Core Elements of the 4Ps Marketing Theory

1. Product

A product is the core value offering provided by a company to the market, encompassing physical products, services, and brand image. According to Sukanta and Muis (2022), factors such as product quality, functionality, and brand loyalty have a direct impact on consumer purchase decisions. Apple's product strategy in the Chinese market emphasizes technological innovation, high-end brand positioning, and ecosystem integration. For example, its iPhone series consistently enhances market competitiveness by upgrading chips and optimizing the user experience.

2. Price

Czinkota et al. (2021) emphasized in their study on "Pricing Decisions" that price is a crucial factor influencing both consumer perception of value and a company's profitability. Pricing strategies include cost-based pricing, market-based pricing, and competition-based pricing (Czinkota et al., 2021). Dermawan et al. (2023) argued that, in a highly competitive market environment, a well-structured pricing model helps companies secure a strong market position. Apple implements a premium pricing strategy, maintaining a high product premium and employing tactics such as discount promotions and installment payments to enhance consumer acceptance.

3. Place

Channel management determines how products reach target consumers and is a critical component of the marketing mix. Dermawan et al. (2023) indicated that companies should integrate both online and offline channels to optimize distribution networks and increase market penetration. In the Chinese market, Apple adopts a multi-channel strategy, which includes Apple Stores, authorized resellers, and e-commerce

platforms such as Tmall and JD.com, to provide a high-quality user experience while strengthening its regional market coverage (Del Mastio, 2021).

4. Promotion

Promotional strategy encompasses approaches such as advertising, public relations, and social media marketing, with the goal of increasing brand visibility and consumer awareness. Aripin et al. (2023) argued that promotions not only enhance market attractiveness but also contribute to shaping the brand's image (Aripin et al., 2023). Furthermore, Del Mastio (2021) indicated that international brands in the Chinese market employ promotional methods such as social media marketing (e.g., Weibo, Douyin), holiday sales, and offline experiential events to boost market share and reinforce brand loyalty (Del Mastio, 2021).

As outlined above, the 4Ps marketing theory, as a foundational framework in marketing, provides a systematic methodology for companies to develop their marketing strategies. Dermawan et al. (2023) noted that this theory is adaptable to various market environments and can be combined with both qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to optimize market decisions. The 4Ps theory emphasizes that businesses should focus on four key elements—Product, Price, Place, and Promotion—to create a well-rounded marketing mix strategy that strengthens market competitiveness and optimizes consumer purchasing behavior. Therefore, this study utilizes the 4Ps marketing theory to systematically examine Apple's marketing model in the Chinese market and its effects, thus revealing the effectiveness of its market strategy and its impact on consumer behavior.

First, at the Product level, Apple continuously reinforces its high-end brand image while enhancing its market competitiveness through innovative product design, exceptional user experience, and a strong brand strategy. Its integrated hardware-software ecosystem further increases user loyalty, making consumers more likely to continue choosing Apple products when upgrading their devices. Second, at the Price level, Apple adopts a premium pricing strategy in the Chinese market, maintaining brand value and product differentiation through high-end pricing. This study explores how Apple manages to balance maintaining its high-end positioning while considering

the price sensitivity and market adaptability of Chinese consumers, ensuring sustained growth in market share. Furthermore, at the Place level, Apple has established a comprehensive distribution network through a diversified approach, including direct retail stores, e-commerce platforms, and partnerships with telecom operators, while optimizing supply chain management to ensure efficient access to target consumers. This study further assesses the impact of its channel strategy on consumer purchasing behavior, analyzing the efficiency of various sales channels and their role in strengthening brand loyalty. Finally, at the Promotion level, Apple leverages digital marketing, social media communication, brand storytelling, and advertising strategies to boost consumer engagement and cultivate a strong brand identity. By continuously optimizing its brand communication strategy, Apple has enhanced its brand influence and maintained its market leadership in a highly competitive environment.

In summary, this study explores Apple's marketing practices in the Chinese market within the framework of the 4Ps marketing theory, analyzing how its marketing strategies influence consumer behavior and the market competitive landscape. The 4Ps theory not only provides theoretical guidance for businesses in formulating marketing strategies but also offers a systematic research perspective to analyze Apple's competitive strategies in China, contributing to a deeper understanding of the core drivers of its market competitiveness.

2.4 Research Relevant

2.4.1 Research Status of Apple's Marketing Strategy in the Chinese Market

As China has emerged as one of the most dynamic and promising smartphone consumer markets worldwide, Apple's marketing strategy in the country has increasingly drawn the attention of scholars. Existing studies have systematically explored Apple's brand development, market positioning, and marketing execution in China from multiple perspectives, including brand image, pricing strategies, channel expansion, and localization adaptation. In earlier research, Lan (2021) focused on Apple's application of a "hunger marketing" strategy. He observed that Apple tightly controls the timing and quantity of new product releases to create a sense of scarcity and anticipation, thereby enhancing perceived value and reinforcing its premium

pricing structure. This approach was particularly effective during early iPhone launches, successfully shaping Apple's image as a prestigious brand. However, Lan also noted that as domestic competitors have grown stronger and consumer rationality has increased, the marginal effectiveness of this strategy has declined—especially among price-sensitive consumer segments. Building on this, Rao (2025) conducted an empirical analysis using the 4Ps marketing theory and the SWOT framework to evaluate Apple's marketing performance in China across product, price, place, and promotion. He concluded that Apple's global strategy—centered on innovation, premium pricing, and channel selectivity—remains effective in sustaining its premium positioning. However, Rao highlighted critical shortcomings, particularly in localization efforts. Apple lacks flexible pricing mechanisms and has been slow to embrace new platforms such as livestream commerce and social e-commerce, placing it at a disadvantage compared to more adaptive domestic brands. He suggested that Apple should strengthen its understanding of Chinese consumer behavior, implement tiered pricing, and develop localized product strategies to increase responsiveness in the local market.

In terms of channel integration and brand stickiness, Zhang (2023) emphasized through case studies that Apple has established a stable and loyal user base in China's high-end smartphone segment by maintaining a globally consistent brand image and minimalist product design. Its strategic partnerships with major Chinese telecom providers such as China Mobile and China Unicom have significantly extended its distribution network and enhanced brand accessibility. Zhang further pointed out that Apple's integrated hardware-software ecosystem—including iOS, the App Store, iCloud, and other services—improves user experience and increases switching costs, which helps maintain Apple's differentiation in an increasingly competitive environment. In summary, existing research has clearly identified the core logic of Apple's marketing strategy in China, particularly in terms of brand positioning, value construction, and ecosystem development. However, most studies remain largely qualitative in nature and lack quantitative analysis of how Apple's 4Ps strategies interact and affect consumer behavior. Therefore, this study builds on previous research by employing a questionnaire survey and structural equation modeling to systematically examine how product, price, place, and promotion strategies influence consumer

purchasing behavior. The goal is to provide a solid theoretical foundation and practical insights for Apple and other multinational tech firms aiming to optimize their marketing strategies and improve consumer engagement in the Chinese market.

2.4.2 Comparative Studies with Domestic Brands

The rapid rise of domestic smartphone brands in China has become a defining trend, presenting increasing competitive pressure for Apple in the local market. Existing studies have conducted in-depth comparisons between Apple and leading Chinese brands such as Huawei and Xiaomi, focusing on brand positioning, pricing strategies, marketing approaches, and localization adaptability. Ding (2023) observed that, although Apple lacks a pricing advantage, it continues to maintain a strong foothold in the mid-to-high-end market due to its globally consistent brand image, robust ecosystem, and high brand recognition. However, domestic brands have demonstrated greater flexibility in localized engagement—particularly through social e-commerce, short video platforms, and community-based user operations—offering content that resonates more closely with the preferences of younger Chinese consumers. These trends continue to exert competitive pressure on Apple. Liu (2024), through a SWOT-based analysis, pointed out that Apple’s key strengths lie in its brand influence and product consistency, while its weaknesses include the limited adoption of emerging marketing tools such as livestream commerce, short videos, and KOL collaborations. Zhang (2023), in his analysis of brand empowerment, argued that Huawei has enhanced both its technological and branding advantages through proprietary chip development and high-end co-branding strategies. In contrast, while Xiaomi has gained traction through its value-for-money positioning, it remains constrained in its high-end market transition due to rigid brand perception and technological limitations. Compared to these local competitors, Apple’s engagement with local digital communication channels has remained relatively conservative, relying primarily on traditional hunger marketing and celebrity endorsements (Cai & Chen, 2024). Rao (2025) emphasized that Apple’s future competitiveness in China will hinge on its ability to dynamically adjust pricing structures, optimize distribution channels, and adapt promotional strategies—thereby enhancing the localization and agility of its 4Ps marketing framework to better compete with the rapid strategic flexibility of domestic brands.

2.4.3 Research from the Perspective of Consumer Behavior

With intensifying market competition, increasing attention has been paid to the influence of Apple's marketing strategy on consumer psychology and purchase behavior in the Chinese market. Cai and Chen (2024), through empirical surveys targeting young Chinese consumers, found that Apple's use of minimalist advertising design, celebrity endorsements, and product placements in films and television significantly enhances both emotional resonance and brand recognition. Their study suggested that emotional marketing plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer engagement and building brand loyalty. He (2024) further argued that consumers in the high-end segment are more concerned with perceived brand value than with price alone. Apple has succeeded in fostering strong brand stickiness that transcends functional utility by integrating premium product experiences, ecosystem compatibility, and coherent brand culture—thereby fostering both rational and emotional attachments among consumers. Additionally, Zhang (2023) highlighted the generational differences in consumption behavior, noting that Gen Z consumers place greater emphasis on self-expression and cultural identification. These consumers tend to favor brands that reflect personal style and social values, compelling Apple to continuously reinforce its cultural relevance through innovative design and community interaction. Rao (2025) added that Apple's user base exhibits high brand loyalty and ecosystem lock-in, indicating that its marketing strategy should focus on the integrated communication of product, brand, and culture. This involves immersive brand experiences, social co-creation, and emotionally resonant word-of-mouth marketing to deepen user engagement and build cognitive trust. Collectively, studies from the consumer behavior perspective suggest that Apple's success in China stems not only from its technological and product advantages but also from its deep understanding of consumer psychology, emotional resonance, and cultural value alignment.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study adopts the classical 4Ps marketing theory as its analytical foundation, identifying product strategy, pricing strategy, place (distribution) strategy, and promotion strategy as the independent variables (IVs). As shown in Figure 2.2, these four components of the marketing mix are hypothesized to jointly influence the dependent variable (DV), namely consumer purchasing behavior. The framework reflects the theoretical assumption that each dimension of Apple's marketing strategies may affect how consumers in the Chinese market perceive, evaluate, and ultimately decide to purchase Apple products. This model serves not only to conceptualize the research variables but also to guide the design of the questionnaire and the development of hypotheses in the following chapter. Through empirical analysis, the study aims to quantify the strength and nature of these relationships, thereby offering practical insights into how multinational companies can optimize their marketing strategies in localized markets such as China.

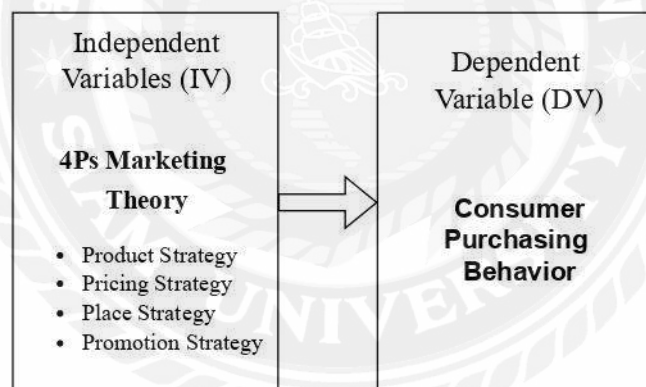


Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research method through a questionnaire survey to analyze the impact of Apple's marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behavior in the Chinese market. Grounded in the 4Ps marketing theory (Product Strategy, Price Strategy, Place Strategy, and Promotion Strategy), the study constructed a research framework to explore how different marketing strategies influence consumer purchasing decisions.

As illustrated in the research framework, Product Strategy, Price Strategy, Place Strategy, and Promotion Strategy serve as the core variables for analyzing their impact on consumer purchasing behavior. The primary data collection method for this study was the questionnaire survey, which employed closed-ended questions and rating scales to ensure standardized and quantifiable analysis of the data. The questionnaire was designed to cover key factors such as consumers' perceptions of Apple products, price sensitivity, purchase intentions, brand loyalty, and the effects of promotional activities.

This study used descriptive statistical analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to analyze the collected data and systematically assess the impact of Apple's marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behavior in the Chinese market. By employing quantitative research methods, the study ensured the objectivity and measurability of the data, providing empirical support for the optimization of Apple's marketing strategies in the Chinese market. Moreover, the questionnaire survey, which adopted a broader sample population, enhanced the representativeness of the research and increased the generalizability of the findings.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target population of this study was Apple users in the Chinese market, covering first-tier, new first-tier, and some second-tier cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Hangzhou, and Nanjing, to ensure the

representativeness of the research data. The selection of Apple users in these cities was based on the following considerations: 1) The core consumer group for Apple products is mainly concentrated in economically developed cities, where consumers have higher brand awareness, which helps in studying the market impact of its marketing strategies; 2) Consumers in these regions have higher purchasing power, which provides more valuable data support for analyzing the relationship between Apple's premium pricing strategy and market acceptance; 3) Apple's marketing activities, such as brand promotion and channel development, are more concentrated in these cities, and consumers in these regions are more likely to directly experience Apple's marketing strategies, thus better reflecting the influence of marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behavior. Therefore, this study focuses on Apple users in major economic centers of China as the survey subjects to obtain more representative data.

3.2.1 Sampling

This study employed a random sampling method to ensure that every consumer within the target population had an equal chance of being selected. Random sampling enhanced the representativeness of the data and its external validity, thus making the research findings more broadly applicable. The random sampling process was stratified based on the distribution of Apple users in the target cities, ensuring a reasonable distribution of data across various cities. Furthermore, this study determined the sample size using the sampling calculation formula proposed by Yamane (1967), with a 95% confidence level ($P = 0.5$), in order to ensure the scientific rigor and statistical reliability of the research data.

3.2.2 Sample Size

To ensure the reliability and representativeness of the research data, this study adopted the sample size calculation formula proposed by Yamane (1973), setting a 95% confidence level and a 5% sampling error (Sampling Error, $e = 0.05$). The formula is as follows:

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + (Ne^2)}$$

Where “N” represents the population size, “n” represents the sample size, and “e” denotes the allowable error (0.05). Given the large number of Apple users in the Chinese market, this study assumed that the population size (NNN) was sufficiently large, and the calculated theoretical minimum sample size was approximately 400. According to the Yamane (1967) sampling formula with “a” 95% confidence level ($e=0.05$), the threshold value “ $N \cdot e^2 = 3.16$ ” was used in the calculation to derive the required sample size. However, to account for potential invalid questionnaires (such as those with errors or missing data), the study planned to distribute 500 questionnaires and aims to ensure at least 400 valid responses, in order to guarantee the accuracy of the data and the robustness of the research conclusions.

In practice, a total of 452 questionnaires were collected, of which 17 were identified as invalid due to errors or missing data. As a result, 435 valid questionnaires were obtained, which were further analyzed to derive meaningful insights.

3.3 Hypothesis

H1: Product strategy has a positive impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

H2: Pricing strategy has a positive impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

H3: Place strategy has a positive impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

H4: Promotion strategy has a positive impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

3.4 Research Instrument

A quantitative research approach was adopted to examine the impact of Apple's marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behavior in China, focusing on the four dimensions of the 4Ps marketing mix: product, pricing, place, and promotion strategies. A structured questionnaire survey was used as the primary data collection instrument to ensure systematic and replicable analysis. This method allowed for the accurate

measurement of relationships between marketing variables and consumer behavior, ensuring reliability and validity in the study findings.

The measurement scales used in this study were adopted from well-established research to ensure validity and reliability. The consumer purchasing behavior scale was adapted from Zhao et al. (2021), which examines the impact of pricing and product information on consumer buying behavior.

The questionnaire consists of multiple sections, each corresponding to one of the four marketing mix dimensions: product, price, channel, and promotion. It includes both closed-ended questions and Likert-scale rating items to assess consumer perceptions and purchasing behavior. The rating scale ranges from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), allowing for a standardized evaluation of consumer responses. The collected data were analyzed using statistical tools to identify patterns and relationships, providing valuable insights for optimizing Apple's marketing strategies in the Chinese market.

Table 3.1 Summary of Research Variables and Measurement Dimensions

Variable	Dimension	Items
Basic Personal Information	Gender, Age, City of Residence, Monthly Personal Income in CNY, Occupation and Apple Product Ownership	6
Product Strategy	P1: Apple’s product quality meets my expectations and enhances my purchase intention.	5
	P2: Apple’s product innovation (e.g., M-series chips, Face ID, Retina display) influences my purchasing decisions.	
	P3: Apple’s product design (e.g., minimalist aesthetics, material quality) strengthens my brand preference.	
	P4: Apple’s ecosystem (e.g., seamless integration between iPhone, Mac, iPad) increases my likelihood of repurchase.	
	P5: The variety of Apple products (e.g., iPhone models, iPads, MacBook) provides enough choices to meet my needs.	
Pricing Strategy	P6: Apple’s pricing is reasonable given its quality and brand reputation.	5
	P7: I am willing to pay a premium for Apple products compared to other brands.	

	P8: Apple's pricing strategy makes me perceive it as a high-end brand.	
	P9: Apple's installment plans and trade-in programs increase my purchasing willingness.	
	P10: Compared to competitors, Apple's product pricing aligns with the value I receive.	
Place Strategy	P11: I can easily purchase Apple products through official stores (Apple Store) and authorized resellers.	5
	P12: I prefer buying Apple products from online channels such as Apple's official website, Tmall, or JD.com.	
	P13: Apple's retail store experience (e.g., in-store services, product trials) enhances my purchase confidence.	
	P14: Apple's online purchasing process is smooth, and delivery services are reliable.	
	P15: The accessibility of Apple's sales channels meets my shopping preferences.	
Promotion Strategy	P16: Apple's marketing campaigns (e.g., social media, advertisements) increase my brand awareness.	5
	P17: Apple's product launch events (e.g., Apple Event) influence my purchasing decisions.	
	P18: Apple's promotional offers (e.g., student discounts, seasonal promotions) encourage me to buy.	
	P19: Apple's endorsements by celebrities or influencers impact my brand perception.	
	P20: Positive word-of-mouth and customer reviews strengthen my intention to purchase Apple products.	
Consumer Purchasing Behavior	CPB1: I have purchased an Apple product in the past 12 months.	5
	CPB2: I plan to purchase an Apple product in the near future.	
	CPB3: I would recommend Apple products to my friends and family.	
	CPB4: I am loyal to Apple and tend to buy their products repeatedly.	
	CPB5: Promotional strategies (e.g., pricing, discounts, marketing campaigns) influence my purchase decision.	

3.5 Reliability and Validity Analysis of the Scale

3.5.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability refers to the consistency of results obtained when the same method is used to measure the same subject repeatedly. In this study, the Cronbach's α coefficient

(internal consistency reliability) is adopted as the primary indicator to examine the stability and consistency of the scale. The Cronbach's α reliability coefficient is the most commonly used measure of reliability. It evaluates the internal consistency of the scale by measuring the correlation between item scores, making it an indicator of internal consistency reliability. This method is suitable for reliability analysis of attitude and opinion-based questionnaires (scales). Generally, the reliability coefficient for the overall scale should ideally be above 0.8 for high internal consistency, while values between 0.7 and 0.8 are considered acceptable. For subscales, a reliability coefficient above 0.7 is preferred, and values between 0.6 and 0.7 are still acceptable. However, if the Cronbach's α coefficient falls below 0.6, it is necessary to reconsider and revise the questionnaire.

Table 3.2 Reliability Analysis of the Questionnaire

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Item
Product Strategy	0.785	5
Pricing Strategy	0.851	5
Place Strategy	0.841	5
Promotion Strategy	0.874	5
Consumer Purchasing Behavior	0.835	5
Overall scale	0.907	25

From the reliability analysis results in Table 3.2, it can be observed that the overall Cronbach's α value for the questionnaire is 0.907, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The Cronbach's α values for each dimension are as follows: Product Strategy: 0.785, Pricing Strategy: 0.851, Place Strategy: 0.841, Promotion Strategy: 0.874, and Consumer Purchasing Behavior: 0.835. These results demonstrate that the questionnaire is reliable and suitable for further analysis.

3.5.2 Validity Analysis

Validity testing refers to the effectiveness and accuracy of the scale used in this study. Internationally, scholars commonly use the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's sphericity test as key indicators for measuring validity. Generally, when the KMO value reaches 0.6 or above, the validity is considered acceptable; when the KMO value reaches 0.7, the effectiveness of factor analysis improves. The closer the KMO

value is to 1, the stronger the correlation between variables, making it more suitable for further factor analysis. Additionally, Bartlett's sphericity test is another widely used method for validity testing. This test examines whether the correlation matrix is significantly different from an identity matrix. The significance level is typically within a 5% confidence interval, and a smaller p-value in Bartlett's test indicates higher validity, suggesting that the dataset is well-suited for factor analysis.

Table 3.3 Validity Analysis of Questionnaire

Variable	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	Bartlett		
		Approx. Chi-Square	(df)	Sig.
Product Strategy	0.817	714.159	10	0.000
Pricing Strategy	0.867	831.011	10	0.000
Place Strategy	0.859	773.390	10	0.000
Promotion Strategy	0.877	1001.314	10	0.000
Consumer Purchasing Behavior	0.855	1001.314	10	0.000
Overall scale	0.912	4780.285	300	0.000

Based on the validity analysis results in Table 3.3, the KMO values for each dimension are as follows: Product Strategy: 0.817, Pricing Strategy: 0.867, Place Strategy: 0.859, Promotion Strategy: 0.877, and Consumer Purchasing Behavior: 0.855. Additionally, the overall KMO value for the questionnaire is 0.912, indicating strong correlations among variables and suitability for factor analysis. Furthermore, Bartlett's sphericity test results for all dimensions and the overall scale are significant ($p = 0.000$), confirming that the dataset meets the requirements for further factor analysis.

3.6 Data Collection

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed through the Wenjuanxing (Questionnaire Star) platform, a widely used online survey tool in China. To maximize accessibility and response rates, the questionnaire was generated as a QR code and disseminated via email, WeChat, and other social media platforms, enabling respondents to conveniently access and complete the survey on their mobile devices or computers. The survey was conducted over a period of three weeks, ensuring a comprehensive data collection process for analysis. Aiming to collect 452 responses,

the study achieved a response rate of 90.4%. During data preprocessing, 17 questionnaires were excluded due to incorrect, missing, or logically inconsistent responses, resulting in 435 valid questionnaires for analysis. The questionnaire consists of demographic information and scales measuring the four dimensions of the 4Ps marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion) and consumer purchasing behavior as the dependent variable. The questionnaire items use a five-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and 5 indicates "strongly agree."

3.7 Data Analysis

3.7.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics primarily focus on three aspects: central tendency, dispersion, and data distribution characteristics. In this study, statistical measures including frequency, mean, standard deviation, variance, kurtosis, and skewness were used to analyze the dataset. The frequency represents the number of occurrences of a variable, and its percentage indicates the proportion within the total sample. The mean (average) reflects the central tendency of the data, representing common characteristics among respondents. Variance and standard deviation measure the dispersion of responses, providing insights into variations in consumer opinions. For example, descriptive statistics were applied to analyze respondents' perceptions of Apple's product quality, price sensitivity, brand loyalty, and responses to promotional strategies.

3.7.2 Independent Samples t-Test

In this study, the independent samples t-test was employed to determine whether there was a significant difference in consumer purchasing behavior between two independent groups, including male and female respondents, as well as younger (under 30) and older (30 and above) age groups. This test examined whether the means of the two groups were statistically different, thereby helping to evaluate the impact of demographic variables on Apple's marketing effectiveness.

3.7.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to explore whether there was a significant relationship between Apple's marketing strategies (Product Strategy, Pricing Strategy,

Place Strategy, and Promotion Strategy) and consumer purchasing behavior. This analysis identified the strength and direction of relationships between variables, providing initial insights into how marketing elements influence consumers' purchase decisions.

3.7.4 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to further examine the influence of Apple's marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behavior. In this analysis, Product Strategy, Pricing Strategy, Place Strategy, and Promotion Strategy were used as independent variables, while Consumer Purchasing Behavior was the dependent variable. This method allowed for assessing the individual and combined effects of different marketing strategies, determining which factors had the most significant impact on consumer decision-making. The regression model helps to quantify the predictive power of Apple's marketing strategies and provides empirical support for optimizing its approach in the Chinese market.

By integrating descriptive statistics, t-tests, correlation analysis, and regression analysis, this study provides a comprehensive evaluation of Apple's marketing strategies in the Chinese market and their impact on consumer purchasing behavior.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This study collected a total of 435 valid questionnaires through an online survey. The first section of the questionnaire aimed to gather demographic information about the respondents. The descriptive statistics of respondents are as follows:

1. Gender Distribution: Among the respondents, 227 (52.2%) were male, while 208 (47.8%) were female, indicating a relatively balanced gender distribution.

2. Age Distribution: The majority of respondents fell within the 25-34 years old age group, accounting for 41.1% (179 respondents). This was followed by 35-44 years old (28.3%), 18-24 years old (19.1%), and 45 years old and above (11.5%), showing that most respondents were young professionals.

3. City of Residence: The respondents were mainly from new first-tier cities (46.7%) and first-tier cities (32.2%), with a smaller proportion from second-tier cities (15.4%) and third-tier or lower-tier cities (5.7%). This indicates that most participants reside in economically developed urban areas.

4. Monthly Personal Income: The largest group of respondents (40.2%) reported a monthly income of 3,000 - 5,999 CNY, followed by 6,000 - 9,999 CNY (37.7%). A smaller percentage earned 10,000 - 14,999 CNY (12.0%), while only 8.0% had an income below 3,000 CNY, and 2.1% reported earning above 15,000 CNY. These figures suggest that most respondents belong to the low-to-middle-income group.

5. Occupation: The majority of respondents were corporate employees (47.1%), followed by professional/technical staff (15.6%), education professionals (11.3%), and healthcare professionals (14.5%). Other occupations, including managers (5.1%), freelancers (3.9%), and other professions (2.5%), accounted for a smaller portion of the sample. Notably, there were no student respondents.

6. Apple Product Ownership: Among all participants, 321 (73.8%) owned Apple products, while 114 (26.2%) did not, indicating a high market penetration of Apple devices among the surveyed population.

The detailed demographic characteristics are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Category	N	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	227	52.2
	Female	208	47.8
Age	18-24 years old	83	19.1
	25-34 years old	179	41.1
	35-44 years old	123	28.3
	45 years old and above	50	11.5
City of Residence	First-tier cities (e.g., Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen)	140	32.2
	New first-tier cities (e.g., Chengdu, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Wuhan)	203	46.7
	Second-tier cities	67	15.4
	Third-tier and lower-tier cities	25	5.7
Monthly Personal Income in CNY	Below 3,000	35	8.0
	3,000 - 5,999	175	40.2
	6,000 - 9,999	164	37.7
	10,000 - 14,999	52	12.0
	Above 15,000	9	2.1
Occupation	Student	0	0
	Corporate Employee	205	47.1
	Professional/Technical Staff	68	15.6
	Education Professional	49	11.3
	Healthcare Professional	63	14.5
	Manager	22	5.1
	Freelancer	17	3.9
	Other	11	2.5
Apple Product Ownership	Yes	321	73.8
	No	114	26.2

4.1.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Variables

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Variables

Variant	Mean	Std. Deviation
Product Strategy	3.02	0.83
Pricing Strategy	3.89	0.89
Place Strategy	3.93	0.87
Promotion Strategy	3.81	0.98
Consumer Purchasing Behavior	3.93	0.86
Overall scale	3.72	0.63

Based on the descriptive statistical analysis results in Table 4.2, the following observations can be made:

1. Product Strategy:

The mean value is 3.02 with a standard deviation of 0.83, indicating a moderate evaluation of Apple's product strategy. While some respondents recognize the quality and innovation of Apple's products, there may be variations in perceptions due to differences in consumer expectations and experiences. This suggests that Apple could further optimize its product development and differentiation strategies to enhance consumer satisfaction.

2. Pricing Strategy:

The mean value is 3.89 with a standard deviation of 0.89, showing a relatively high rating for Apple's pricing strategy. Consumers generally accept Apple's premium pricing model, but the standard deviation suggests some variation in opinions. While some consumers appreciate the brand value and high-quality experience, others may find the pricing less accessible. Apple may need to explore flexible pricing strategies, such as trade-in programs and installment plans, to improve affordability.

3. Place Strategy:

The mean value is 3.93 with a standard deviation of 0.87, suggesting that respondents have a positive perception of Apple's distribution channels, including online platforms and physical stores. The relatively high mean indicates consumer satisfaction with accessibility and purchasing convenience, but the standard deviation

suggests differences in individual experiences, possibly due to regional disparities in store availability or service quality. Apple could further refine its omnichannel strategy to provide a more consistent purchasing experience.

4. Promotion Strategy:

The mean value is 3.81 with a standard deviation of 0.98, indicating a generally favorable view of Apple's promotional activities, such as brand storytelling, product launch events, and influencer marketing. However, the higher standard deviation implies variation in consumer responses, possibly reflecting differences in marketing effectiveness across different consumer segments. Apple may need to further tailor its promotional strategies to different target audiences to enhance engagement and brand resonance.

5. Consumer Purchasing Behavior:

The mean value is 3.93 with a standard deviation of 0.86, suggesting that most respondents have a positive attitude toward purchasing Apple products. The relatively low variation in responses indicates a strong and consistent consumer base, but some differences in purchasing behavior still exist, likely influenced by personal preferences, brand loyalty, and affordability factors. Apple should continue to strengthen its consumer engagement strategies to maintain a high level of customer retention and satisfaction.

6. Overall Scale:

The overall mean value is 3.72, with a standard deviation of 0.63, reflecting an overall positive and stable evaluation of Apple's marketing strategies and their impact on consumer purchasing behavior. The relatively low standard deviation suggests that most respondents share similar perceptions of Apple's strategic approach. However, continuous improvements in product innovation, pricing flexibility, distribution efficiency, and promotional effectiveness could further enhance Apple's competitive position in the Chinese market.

In summary, the descriptive statistical analysis demonstrates that respondents generally hold positive views toward Apple's product strategy, pricing, place strategy,

promotion strategy, and purchasing behavior. However, variations in perceptions indicate areas for potential optimization, particularly in pricing accessibility, regional purchasing experiences, and promotional effectiveness. These findings provide empirical support for further in-depth analysis, helping Apple refine its marketing strategies to better align with consumer expectations and market demands.

Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of 4Ps Marketing Strategy

	N	Mean	SD	Analysis
Product Strategy				
P1: Apple's product quality meets my expectations and enhances my purchase intention.	435	3.74	1.273	above average
P2: Apple's product innovation (e.g., M-series chips, Face ID, Retina display) influences my purchasing decisions.	435	3.70	1.239	above average
P3: Apple's product design (e.g., minimalist aesthetics, material quality) strengthens my brand preference.	435	3.72	1.227	above average
P4: Apple's ecosystem (e.g., seamless integration between iPhone, Mac, iPad) increases my likelihood of repurchase.	435	3.69	1.225	above average
P5: The variety of Apple products (e.g., iPhone models, iPads, MacBooks) provides enough choices to meet my needs.	435	3.09	1.26	average
Pricing Strategy				
P6: Apple's pricing is reasonable given its quality and brand reputation.	435	3.93	1.127	above average
P7: I am willing to pay a premium for Apple products compared to other brands.	435	3.91	1.075	above average
P8: Apple's pricing strategy makes me perceive it as a high-end brand.	435	3.86	1.165	above average
P9: Apple's installment plans and trade-in programs increase my purchasing willingness.	435	3.83	1.148	above average
P10: Compared to competitors, Apple's product pricing aligns with the value I receive.	435	3.92	1.121	above average
Place Strategy				
P11: I can easily purchase Apple products through official stores (Apple Store) and authorized resellers.	435	4.02	1.077	above average
P12: I prefer buying Apple products from online channels such as Apple's official website, Tmall, or JD.com.	435	3.89	1.083	above average

P13: Apple's retail store experience (e.g., in-store services, product trials) enhances my purchase confidence.	435	3.94	1.120	above average
P14: Apple's online purchasing process is smooth, and delivery services are reliable.	435	3.94	1.106	above average
P15: The accessibility of Apple's sales channels meets my shopping preferences.	435	3.87	1.170	above average
Promotion Strategy				
P16: Apple's marketing campaigns (e.g., social media, advertisements) increase my brand awareness.	435	3.76	1.227	above average
P17: Apple's product launch events (e.g., Apple Event) influence my purchasing decisions.	435	3.83	1.225	above average
P18: Apple's promotional offers (e.g., student discounts, seasonal promotions) encourage me to buy.	435	3.83	1.219	above average
P19: Apple's endorsements by celebrities or influencers impact my brand perception.	435	3.76	1.191	above average
P20: Positive word-of-mouth and customer reviews strengthen my intention to purchase Apple products.	435	3.88	1.129	above average

Based on Table 4.3, the descriptive statistical analysis of the 4Ps marketing strategy reveals that respondents generally have a positive perception of Apple's product strategy, pricing strategy, place strategy, and promotion strategy, with most items receiving above-average ratings (mean values above 3.5).

1. Product Strategy:

Respondents rated Apple's product quality (Mean = 3.74), innovation (Mean = 3.70), design (Mean = 3.72), and ecosystem integration (Mean = 3.69) as above average, indicating that these factors play an essential role in shaping consumer preferences. However, product variety (Mean = 3.09) received a lower, average rating, suggesting that while Apple offers different product models, some consumers may still feel that the variety is insufficient to meet their needs.

2. Pricing Strategy:

According to the descriptive strategies analysis results in Table 4.3, respondents generally agreed that Apple's pricing strategy aligns with its brand value. The

perception of pricing reasonability (Mean = 3.93), willingness to pay a premium (Mean = 3.91), and the alignment between price and received value (Mean = 3.92) all received above-average scores. Additionally, Apple's pricing strategy contributes to its high-end brand positioning (Mean = 3.86), while installment plans and trade-in programs (Mean = 3.83) increase consumers' purchasing willingness. These findings suggest that although Apple's pricing is perceived as premium, consumers recognize its value proposition and are willing to pay more for the brand.

3. Place Strategy:

The highest-rated aspect of Apple's marketing strategy is its place strategy. Respondents rated official store accessibility the highest (Mean = 4.02), followed by in-store experience (Mean = 3.94) and online purchasing process (Mean = 3.94). Online purchasing preferences (Mean = 3.89) and sales channel accessibility (Mean = 3.87) also received above-average ratings. This indicates that Apple's distribution channels and shopping experience significantly enhance consumer confidence and satisfaction.

4. Promotion Strategy:

Apple's promotional strategy was also rated positively by respondents. Marketing campaigns (Mean = 3.76), product launch events (Mean = 3.83), and promotional offers such as student discounts (Mean = 3.83) were all perceived to effectively influence consumer decisions. Positive word-of-mouth and customer reviews received the highest promotional rating (Mean = 3.88), indicating their critical role in shaping purchasing intention. However, celebrity endorsements (Mean = 3.76) received relatively lower ratings compared to other elements, suggesting that while influencer marketing contributes to brand perception, it may not be as impactful as peer-based recommendations or direct promotional efforts.

Overall, the 4Ps marketing strategy analysis indicates that Apple's place strategy and pricing strategy received the highest ratings, followed by product strategy and promotion strategy. While product variety received a neutral rating, all other aspects were perceived above average, highlighting Apple's strong market positioning. These insights suggest that Apple should continue enhancing its distribution and pricing

strategies while addressing consumer concerns about product variety to further strengthen brand loyalty and purchasing behavior.

Table 4.4 Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Consumer Purchasing Behavior

	N	Mean	SD	Analysis
CPB1: I have purchased an Apple product in the past 12 months.	435	3.89	1.145	above average
CPB2: I plan to purchase an Apple product in the near future.	435	3.95	1.083	above average
CPB3: I would recommend Apple products to my friends and family.	435	3.97	1.122	above average
CPB4: I am loyal to Apple and tend to buy their products repeatedly.	435	3.89	1.097	above average
CPB5: Promotional strategies (e.g., pricing, discounts, marketing campaigns) influence my purchase decision.	435	3.93	1.064	above average

Based on Table 4.4, the descriptive statistical analysis of consumer purchasing behavior shows that all mean values exceed 3.5, indicating an overall above-average tendency among respondents to engage with Apple products. The highest-rated item is willingness to recommend Apple products (Mean = 3.97, SD = 1.122), followed closely by future purchase intentions (Mean = 3.95, SD = 1.083) and the influence of promotional strategies (Mean = 3.93, SD = 1.064). Past purchases and repeat purchase behavior received the same mean score of 3.89, with standard deviations of 1.145 and 1.097, respectively, reflecting consistent purchasing behavior.

These results suggest that respondents generally exhibit a positive purchasing tendency toward Apple products, with brand recommendation and future purchase intent being particularly strong. Additionally, promotional strategies play a key role in influencing decisions, further reinforcing consumer engagement. However, the standard deviations indicate some variability in responses, suggesting differences in individual purchasing preferences and decision-making factors.

4.1.3 Inferential Statistical Analysis

To further examine the relationships between Apple's marketing strategies and consumer purchasing behavior, this study employed Pearson correlation coefficients to

analyze the linear relationships and their strengths between variables. This analysis serves as a foundation for subsequent regression analysis and provides insights into how different marketing strategies influence consumer decisions.

Table 4.5 Correlation Analysis between Variables

		Product Strategy	Pricing Strategy	Place Strategy	Promotion Strategy
Consumer Purchasing Behavior	Pearson	0.456**	0.307**	0.442**	0.431**
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

** . At the 0.01 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant

Based on the correlation coefficients between the research variables presented in Table 4.5, it can be observed that all correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed), indicating strong relationships between Apple's marketing strategies and consumer purchasing behavior. Among them, Product Strategy ($r = 0.456$, $p = 0.000$) exhibits the strongest positive correlation with consumer purchasing behavior, suggesting that factors such as product quality, innovation, and ecosystem integration play a crucial role in influencing consumer decisions. Place Strategy ($r = 0.442$, $p = 0.000$) also shows a strong correlation, emphasizing the importance of distribution channels, including Apple's official stores, authorized retailers, and e-commerce platforms, in shaping purchasing behavior. Promotion Strategy ($r = 0.431$, $p = 0.000$) demonstrates a moderate-to-strong correlation, highlighting the effectiveness of Apple's brand communication, advertising campaigns, and social media engagement in driving consumer interest and purchase intent. Pricing Strategy ($r = 0.307$, $p = 0.000$), while still significant, has the weakest correlation among the four variables, indicating that although price plays a role in consumer decisions, factors such as brand loyalty and perceived value may hold greater influence. These findings suggest that all four marketing strategies contribute positively to consumer purchasing behavior, with product strategy having the most significant impact, followed closely by place strategy and promotion strategy, while pricing strategy plays a relatively smaller role.

4.1.4 Regression Analysis

Table 4.6 Regression Analysis

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	20.512	1.274		16.106	0.000		
	Gender	-0.751	0.413	-0.088	-1.818	0.070	0.990	1.010
	Age	-0.173	0.234	-0.037	-0.737	0.461	0.926	1.079
	City of Residence	0.077	0.246	0.015	0.314	0.753	0.987	1.013
	Monthly Personal Income in CNY	-0.098	0.244	-0.020	-0.401	0.688	0.928	1.078
	Occupation	0.092	0.124	0.036	0.740	0.460	0.995	1.005
	Apple Product Ownership	0.346	0.468	0.036	0.739	0.461	0.995	1.005
2	(Constant)	6.093	1.502		4.056	0.000		
	Gender	-0.009	0.347	-0.001	-.026	0.980	0.962	1.040
	Age	0.005	0.195	0.001	.025	0.980	0.915	1.093
	City of Residence	0.097	0.205	0.019	.475	0.635	0.982	1.018
	Monthly Personal Income in CNY	-0.226	0.203	-0.046	-1.112	0.267	0.917	1.090
	Occupation	0.007	0.103	0.003	.068	0.946	0.989	1.011
	Apple Product Ownership	0.386	0.389	0.040	.993	0.321	0.991	1.009
	Product Strategy	0.235	0.051	0.227	4.596	0.000	0.652	1.534
	Pricing Strategy	0.104	0.042	0.109	2.499	0.013	0.839	1.191
	Place Strategy	0.255	0.045	0.259	5.674	0.000	0.759	1.317
	Promotion Strategy	0.150	0.043	0.171	3.485	0.001	0.657	1.521

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Table 4.6 presents the regression analysis results examining the effects of product strategy, pricing strategy, place strategy, and promotion strategy on consumer purchasing behavior, while controlling for demographic variables including gender, age, city of residence, income, occupation, and Apple product ownership.

Model 1 includes only demographic variables as predictors. The results indicate that gender ($B = -0.751$, $p = 0.070$), age ($B = -0.173$, $p = 0.461$), city of residence ($B = 0.077$, $p = 0.753$), monthly income ($B = -0.098$, $p = 0.688$), occupation ($B = 0.092$, $p = 0.460$), and Apple product ownership ($B = 0.346$, $p = 0.461$) are not statistically significant predictors of consumer purchasing behavior, as their p-values exceed the conventional threshold ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that demographic factors alone do not have a substantial influence on purchasing behavior.

Model 2, which includes the key independent variables, significantly improves the model fit. Product strategy ($B = 0.235$, $p < 0.001$), pricing strategy ($B = 0.104$, $p = 0.013$), place strategy ($B = 0.255$, $p < 0.001$), and promotion strategy ($B = 0.150$, $p = 0.001$) all show statistically significant positive effects on consumer purchasing behavior. Among these, place strategy ($B = 0.255$) has the strongest influence, followed by product strategy ($B = 0.235$), suggesting that distribution channels and product quality play a crucial role in influencing consumer decisions. Promotion strategy ($B = 0.150$) and pricing strategy ($B = 0.104$) also contribute positively, indicating that marketing efforts and pricing strategies impact purchasing behavior but to a lesser extent.

Regarding collinearity statistics, all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are below 1.6, indicating no significant multicollinearity issues, ensuring the reliability of the regression estimates.

In summary, the regression analysis confirms that place strategy and product strategy have the most substantial impact on consumer purchasing behavior, followed by promotion strategy and pricing strategy. Meanwhile, demographic variables do not significantly influence purchasing decisions. These findings suggest that Apple should prioritize optimizing its distribution channels and product quality while maintaining effective marketing campaigns and competitive pricing strategies to enhance consumer engagement and drive sales.

Table 4.7 Summary of the Model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	0.113 ^a	0.013	-0.001	4.28179	0.013	0.918	6	428	0.482	
2	0.573 ^b	0.328	0.313	3.54794	0.316	49.841	4	424	0.000	1.969

a. Predictors: (Constant), Apple Product Ownership, Monthly Personal Income in CNY, Gender, Occupation, City of Residence, Age.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Apple Product Ownership, Monthly Personal Income in CNY, Gender, Occupation, City of Residence, Age, Pricing Strategy, Place Strategy, Promotion Strategy, Product Strategy.

c. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Table 4.7 presents the summary of the regression models examining the impact of product strategy, pricing strategy, place strategy, and promotion strategy on consumer purchasing behavior, while controlling for demographic factors such as gender, age, city of residence, income, occupation, and Apple product ownership.

Model 1, which includes only demographic variables as predictors, explains 1.3% of the variance in consumer purchasing behavior ($R^2 = 0.013$, Adjusted $R^2 = -0.001$) and is not statistically significant ($p = 0.482$). This suggests that demographic factors alone have minimal influence on consumer purchasing behavior. The high standard error (4.28179) further indicates that additional explanatory variables are needed to improve the model's predictive accuracy.

Model 2, which incorporates product strategy, pricing strategy, place strategy, and promotion strategy, significantly improves the model's explanatory power. The R^2 value increases to 0.328, and the Adjusted R^2 rises to 0.313, indicating that 32.8% of the variance in consumer purchasing behavior is explained by the independent variables. The F-change value (49.841, $p < 0.001$) confirms that the addition of Apple's marketing strategies significantly enhances the model's predictive ability. Additionally, the reduced standard error (3.54794) suggests a better model fit.

Regarding autocorrelation, the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.969) falls within the acceptable range (1.5-2.5), indicating no significant autocorrelation issues, which ensures the reliability of the regression estimates.

Overall, the results confirm that Apple's marketing strategies, particularly product strategy, place strategy, and promotion strategy, play a significant role in shaping consumer purchasing behavior, whereas demographic factors alone do not have a substantial impact. These findings emphasize the need for a strategic focus on product innovation, optimized distribution channels, and effective promotional efforts to enhance consumer engagement and drive sales in the Chinese market.

The research results confirm all the hypotheses in this study: H1, which proposes that product strategy positively influences consumer purchasing behavior, is supported, as the regression analysis indicates a significant positive impact. H2, which suggests that pricing strategy positively influences consumer purchasing behavior, is validated, showing a statistically significant effect, confirming that while Apple's premium pricing model is accepted, it still plays a role in consumer decision-making. H3, which states that place strategy positively influences consumer purchasing behavior, is confirmed, as the regression results demonstrate that Apple's strong distribution channels significantly enhance purchasing confidence and accessibility. H4, which posits that promotion strategy positively influences consumer purchasing behavior, is strongly supported, indicating that Apple's marketing efforts, including product launches, advertisements, and discounts, effectively drive consumer purchasing decisions.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Research Objective 1: To examine the impact of product strategy on consumer purchasing behavior

The present study aimed to examine the impact of product strategy on consumer purchasing behavior in the Chinese market. The discussion of findings integrates the

quantitative results with insights from previous literature to interpret the significance of the study outcomes.

According to the regression analysis, product strategy had a significant positive effect on consumer purchasing behavior ($B = 0.235$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that Apple's product quality, innovation, ecosystem integration, and design aesthetics strongly influence consumers' purchase decisions. Among the marketing mix elements, product strategy ranked as the second most influential factor, reflecting consumers' preference for high-quality, technologically advanced, and well-integrated Apple products.

These findings align with previous research emphasizing the role of product innovation and quality in consumer brand preference and loyalty. Krishnan et al. (2022) argued that product differentiation is a critical factor influencing purchase intent, particularly in high-end markets. Similarly, Katsikeas et al. (2016) found that brand trust and technological superiority play a decisive role in customer retention, a result that is evident in Apple's continuous hardware and software improvements. However, some studies highlight Apple's limited product diversity compared to competitors like Huawei and Xiaomi, which may restrict its appeal to a broader range of consumers. This supports the moderate standard deviation in this study's results, suggesting that while Apple's product quality is widely recognized, some consumers feel the need for greater variety and customization options.

4.2.2 Research Objective 2: To examine the impact of pricing strategy on consumer purchasing behavior

The study further examined the effect of pricing strategy on consumer purchasing behavior to determine how Apple's premium pricing model influences purchasing decisions in China.

The regression analysis confirmed that pricing strategy had a significant but relatively lower impact on consumer purchasing behavior ($B = 0.104$, $p = 0.013$), with a β value of 0.109, the lowest among the four marketing strategies. This suggests that Apple's brand reputation and perceived quality outweigh pricing concerns for many consumers, though pricing remains an important factor for some market segments.

These findings are consistent with past studies on premium brand pricing strategies. Czinkota et al. (2021) emphasized that high pricing can enhance brand perception, reinforcing exclusivity and desirability. However, Apple's high pricing has also led to cautious consumer behavior, as noted by Katsikeas et al. (2016), who found that some Chinese consumers hesitate to purchase Apple products due to affordability concerns. This aligns with the moderate standard deviation observed in this study, suggesting that while many consumers accept Apple's pricing model, some remain price-sensitive and may consider alternative brands.

4.2.3 Research Objective 3: To examine the impact of place (channel) strategy on consumer purchasing behavior

This research also investigated the influence of place strategy on consumer purchasing behavior, focusing on how Apple's multi-channel distribution system impacts accessibility and purchasing decisions.

The regression analysis revealed that place strategy had the strongest impact on consumer purchasing behavior among all four marketing mix elements ($B = 0.255$, $p < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.259$). This indicates that Apple's extensive distribution network, including flagship stores, authorized resellers, and e-commerce platforms, plays a key role in shaping consumer purchase decisions.

These findings support prior research emphasizing the importance of an effective distribution network in driving consumer engagement. Dermawan et al. (2023) highlighted that a strong omnichannel strategy enhances customer satisfaction and market penetration. Furthermore, Apple's premium in-store experience, which includes product trials, technical support, and brand immersion, has been found to increase consumer confidence and reinforce brand loyalty (Del Mastio, 2021).

Interestingly, place strategy exhibited a stronger influence than product strategy, which contrasts with some previous studies that prioritize product innovation as the dominant factor. This could be attributed to China's highly developed e-commerce ecosystem, where fast logistics, seamless online purchasing, and multiple distribution

options significantly impact buying behavior. This suggests that Apple's continued expansion of both physical and digital sales channels will be essential for sustaining market growth in China.

4.2.4 Research Objective 4: To examine the impact of promotion strategy on consumer purchasing behavior

Finally, the study explored the effect of promotion strategy on consumer purchasing behavior, focusing on Apple's advertising, product launches, digital marketing, and promotional discounts.

The regression analysis confirmed that promotion strategy had a significant positive impact on consumer purchasing behavior ($B = 0.150$, $p = 0.001$, $\beta = 0.171$). This suggests that Apple's branding efforts, including social media campaigns and product launch events, effectively increase consumer engagement and purchase intent.

These findings align with prior studies highlighting the importance of marketing communications in consumer decision-making. Sapre and Longani (2024) emphasized that brand storytelling, targeted advertising, and digital engagement are crucial for shaping brand perception. Apple's reliance on influencer marketing and viral product launches has been identified as a major driver of sales growth, as noted by Khalid & Viktoria (2023).

However, the study also found that promotion strategy was not the most influential factor, ranking below place and product strategies. This suggests that while Apple's marketing campaigns enhance awareness, consumers are more driven by product quality and purchasing convenience. These results are consistent with studies showing that premium brands rely more on brand equity and ecosystem value rather than aggressive discounting or high-frequency promotional offers.

In conclusion, this study confirms that all four marketing mix elements positively influence consumer purchasing behavior, with place strategy having the strongest impact, followed by product strategy, promotion strategy, and pricing strategy. These findings align with previous research while also offering new insights into the Chinese market, where convenience and accessibility play an increasingly vital role in

purchasing decisions. To sustain market growth, Apple should continue expanding its distribution channels, refine its pricing strategy, and further leverage promotional efforts to reinforce brand engagement.



Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

5.1.1 Research Question 1: Does product strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?

The study findings confirm that product strategy has a significant positive impact on consumer purchasing behavior. The regression analysis results ($B = 0.235$, $p < 0.001$) indicate that Apple's product quality, innovation, ecosystem integration, and design aesthetics play a crucial role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. These results align with previous research highlighting that technological superiority and seamless ecosystem integration strengthen brand loyalty and repeat purchases. The study suggests that Apple should continue focusing on product differentiation, innovation, and user experience to maintain its premium positioning and attract consumers in the Chinese market.

5.1.2 Research Question 2: Does pricing strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?

The study found that pricing strategy also significantly influences consumer purchasing behavior, although its impact is relatively lower compared to other marketing mix elements ($B = 0.104$, $p = 0.013$). This indicates that while Apple's premium pricing model is generally accepted by consumers who value quality and brand reputation, price sensitivity still exists in certain market segments. Previous research supports the idea that perceived brand value can mitigate price concerns, but pricing remains an important consideration, particularly for price-sensitive consumers. The findings suggest that Apple should explore pricing flexibility through installment plans and trade-in programs to enhance accessibility without diluting its premium brand image.

5.1.3 Research Question 3: Does place strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?

The findings demonstrate that place strategy has the strongest influence on consumer purchasing behavior among the four marketing mix elements ($B = 0.255$, p

< 0.001). Apple's well-developed distribution network, flagship stores, authorized resellers, and e-commerce platforms ensure a seamless purchasing experience, increasing consumer trust and confidence. These results align with studies emphasizing that convenience and accessibility play a major role in driving consumer decisions, particularly in digitally advanced markets like China. The study suggests that Apple should continue optimizing its omnichannel presence and expanding regional accessibility to further enhance consumer engagement.

5.1.4 Research Question 4: Does promotion strategy positively influence consumer purchasing behavior?

The study confirms that promotion strategy significantly influences consumer purchasing behavior ($B = 0.150, p = 0.001$). Apple's marketing campaigns, social media engagement, and high-profile product launch events contribute to strong brand awareness and customer engagement. Previous research supports the idea that consistent brand storytelling and promotional activities effectively enhance brand perception. However, the results also indicate that Apple's reliance on premium branding reduces the necessity for aggressive promotional discounts. The study suggests that Apple should continue leveraging influencer marketing, digital campaigns, and product events while selectively using promotional discounts to attract new customer segments.

Overall, the study confirms that Apple's 4Ps marketing strategy positively influences consumer purchasing behavior, with place strategy exerting the strongest impact, followed by product strategy, promotion strategy, and pricing strategy. The findings suggest that Apple should focus on strengthening its distribution network, maintaining product innovation, and optimizing targeted promotional efforts to sustain its competitive edge in the Chinese market.

5.2 Recommendation

5.2.1 Enhancing Product Strategy for Market Expansion

Apple should continue to prioritize innovation and ecosystem integration, as these factors significantly influence consumer purchasing behavior. However, the findings suggest that some consumers perceive limited product variety, particularly compared

to domestic competitors like Huawei and Xiaomi. To address this, Apple could introduce region-specific models or feature variations tailored to Chinese consumer preferences, such as foldable smartphones or AI-enhanced functionalities that are gaining popularity. Additionally, expanding offerings in wearable technology and smart home integration while leveraging Apple's ecosystem can create a more interconnected user experience. Apple may also enhance customization options, such as color variants or localized software features, to better cater to Chinese users.

5.2.2 Refining Pricing Strategies to Attract Wider Consumer Segments

While Apple's premium pricing model maintains brand prestige, the study highlights that price sensitivity exists in certain consumer segments. To ensure broader accessibility without devaluing the brand, Apple could expand installment plans and financing options, particularly targeting younger consumers and students. Additionally, seasonal or loyalty-based trade-in programs that allow existing users to upgrade at reduced costs while keeping resale value high could incentivize repeat purchases. Apple may also consider regional pricing variations, offering more competitive pricing in lower-tier cities while maintaining its premium positioning in major metropolitan areas.

5.2.3 Strengthening Place Strategy Through Omnichannel Expansion

Since place strategy was found to have the strongest impact on consumer purchasing behavior, Apple should enhance accessibility by integrating online and offline experiences more effectively. This can be achieved by expanding official Apple retail stores and authorized resellers in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, increasing market penetration beyond Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. Additionally, improving e-commerce and logistics efficiency, particularly on platforms like JD.com, Tmall, and WeChat Mini Programs, will provide same-day or instant delivery in more regions. Strengthening the Apple Store experience with localized services, such as on-site trade-in assessments, product personalization, and interactive workshops in Mandarin, can further improve consumer engagement.

5.2.4 Optimizing Promotion Strategy for Local Market Engagement

Apple's promotion strategy significantly influences purchasing behavior, particularly through digital marketing and high-profile product launches. To maximize

effectiveness, Apple should leverage Chinese social media platforms, including Douyin (TikTok China), Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book), and WeChat, to reach younger audiences through localized influencer partnerships and viral campaigns. Additionally, enhancing AI-driven personalized marketing by utilizing big data analytics on Alibaba and JD.com can help create targeted promotions based on consumer behavior and purchase history. Apple can also strengthen limited-time promotional bundles with accessories, such as AirPods discounts with iPhone purchases, to increase perceived value and encourage purchases.

5.2.5 Strategic Implications for Apple's Growth in China

To sustain long-term success in the Chinese market, Apple must adapt its 4Ps marketing strategy by continuing product innovation while addressing consumer demand for greater variety, implementing flexible pricing structures to attract different income groups, enhancing omnichannel retail strategies for improved accessibility and convenience, and localizing promotional efforts to align with China's unique digital landscape and consumer behaviors. By refining its marketing approach based on these recommendations, Apple can strengthen consumer engagement, increase market penetration, and sustain its leadership position in China.

5.3 Further Study

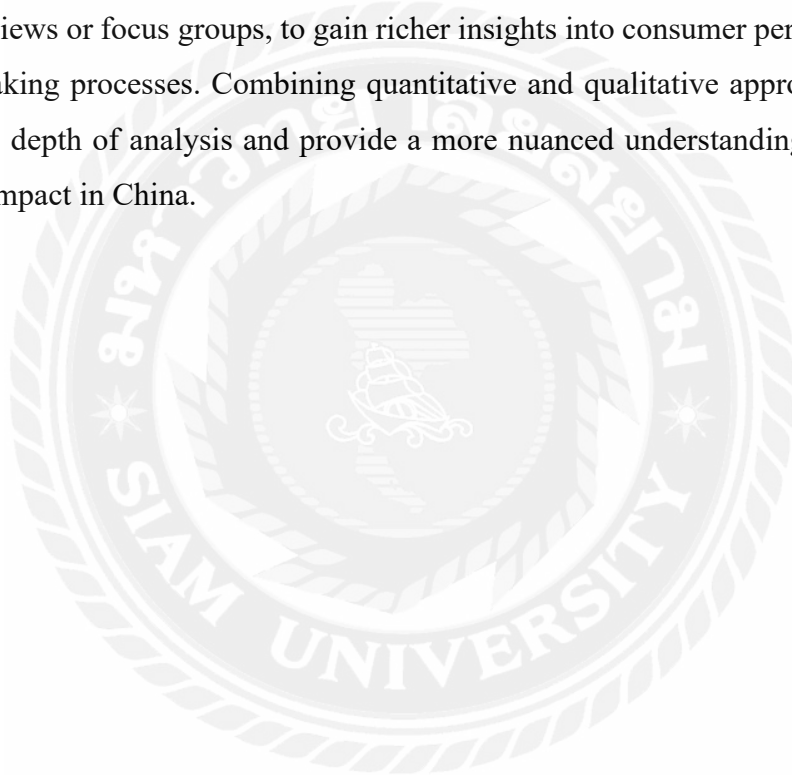
Future research should explore additional factors beyond the 4Ps marketing mix that influence consumer purchasing behavior in the Chinese market. While this study confirms the significant impact of product, pricing, place, and promotion strategies, other elements such as brand perception, customer service quality, and technological advancements may also play a crucial role in shaping consumer decisions. Examining these factors may provide a more comprehensive understanding of Apple's market positioning and consumer preferences.

Further studies may also consider conducting longitudinal research to assess how Apple's marketing strategies evolve over time and how shifts in consumer behavior influence purchasing decisions. Given the fast-changing competitive landscape,

tracking the effectiveness of Apple's strategies across different time periods could offer valuable insights for both researchers and practitioners.

Additionally, future research should explore the impact of regional differences within China, as consumer behavior in Tier 1 cities such as Beijing and Shanghai may differ significantly from that in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. Investigating how Apple should adjust its marketing approach for different consumer segments could provide more targeted strategic recommendations.

Lastly, future research may incorporate qualitative methodologies, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, to gain richer insights into consumer perceptions and decision-making processes. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches could enhance the depth of analysis and provide a more nuanced understanding of Apple's marketing impact in China.



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Appendix

Dear Consumer,

Thank you for participating in this survey. This study aims to explore the impact of Apple's 4Ps marketing strategies (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) on consumer purchasing behavior. This questionnaire is anonymous, and all data will be used solely for academic research. Your personal information and responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Your genuine thoughts and opinions are crucial to this research, so please answer based on your actual experiences and perceptions. We greatly appreciate your valuable time and participation. Wishing you a pleasant day!

Part I: Basic personal information

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. What is your age group?

☐ 18-24 years old

☐ 25-34 years old

☐ 35-44 years old

☐ 45 years old and above

3. Which city do you reside in?

☐ First-tier cities (e.g., Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen)

☐ New first-tier cities (e.g., Chengdu, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Wuhan)

☐ Second-tier cities

☐ Third-tier and lower-tier cities

4. What is your monthly personal income in CNY?

- ☐ Below 3,000
- ☐ 3,000 - 5,999
- ☐ 6,000 - 9,999
- ☐ 10,000 - 14,999
- ☐ Above 15,000

5. What is your occupation?

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Corporate Employee
- ☐ Professional/Technical Staff
- ☐ Education Professional
- ☐ Healthcare Professional
- ☐ Manager
- ☐ Freelancer
- ☐ Other

6. Do you own any Apple products?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



Part II: Likert Level 5 Scale

Please choose the option that you think most agree with according to the actual situation. (1=very dissatisfied, 2=somewhat dissatisfied, 3=basically satisfied, 4=somewhat satisfied, 5=very satisfied).

Table A-1 Product Strategy Scale

Items	1	2	3	4	5
P1: Apple's product quality meets my expectations and enhances my purchase intention.					
P2: Apple's product innovation (e.g., M-series chips, Face ID, Retina display) influences my purchasing decisions.					
P3: Apple's product design (e.g., minimalist aesthetics, material quality) strengthens my brand preference.					
P4: Apple's ecosystem (e.g., seamless integration between iPhone, Mac, iPad) increases my likelihood of repurchase.					
P5: The variety of Apple products (e.g., iPhone models, iPads, MacBooks) provides enough choices to meet my needs.					

Table A-2 Pricing Strategy Scale

Items	1	2	3	4	5
P6: Apple's pricing is reasonable given its quality and brand reputation.					
P7: I am willing to pay a premium for Apple products compared to other brands.					
P8: Apple's pricing strategy makes me perceive it as a high-end brand.					
P9: Apple's installment plans and trade-in programs increase my purchasing willingness.					
P10: Compared to competitors, Apple's product pricing aligns with the value I receive.					

Table A-3 Place Strategy Scale

Items	1	2	3	4	5
P11: I can easily purchase Apple products through official stores (Apple Store) and authorized resellers.					
P12: I prefer buying Apple products from online channels such as Apple's official website, Tmall, or JD.com.					
P13: Apple's retail store experience (e.g., in-store services, product trials) enhances my purchase confidence.					
P14: Apple's online purchasing process is smooth, and delivery services are reliable.					
P15: The accessibility of Apple's sales channels meets my shopping preferences.					

Table A-4 Promotion Strategy Scale

Items	1	2	3	4	5
P16: Apple's marketing campaigns (e.g., social media, advertisements) increase my brand awareness.					
P17: Apple's product launch events (e.g., Apple Event) influence my purchasing decisions.					
P18: Apple's promotional offers (e.g., student discounts, seasonal promotions) encourage me to buy.					
P19: Apple's endorsements by celebrities or influencers impact my brand perception.					
P20: Positive word-of-mouth and customer reviews strengthen my intention to purchase Apple products.					

Table A-5 Consumer Purchasing Behavior Scale

Items	1	2	3	4	5
CPB1: I have purchased an Apple product in the past 12 months.					
CPB2: I plan to purchase an Apple product in the near future.					
CPB3: I would recommend Apple products to my friends and family.					
CPB4: I am loyal to Apple and tend to buy their products repeatedly.					
CPB5: Promotional strategies (e.g., pricing, discounts, marketing campaigns) influence my purchase decision.					