Research Paper

Exploring User Experience Perceptions of Video Covers on Content E-Commerce Platforms through the Lens of E-Commerce Politeness

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ABSTRACT: *This study focuses on the rapid development of content e-commerce platforms and examines video covers as the primary point of user interaction. Despite their importance, video covers are often plagued by issues such as "clickbait" and "cover fraud," which undermine user experience. Innovatively, this research introduces the concept of e-commerce politeness into video cover design studies, investigating how cover design influences users' perception of politeness in interaction. Using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT), 240 valid incidents were systematically collected and analyzed to construct a classification framework of "polite–impolite" behaviors in video covers, with five core categories each for satisfactory and unsatisfactory incidents. Findings reveal that user dissatisfaction is highly concentrated in the fundamental dimensions of "authenticity and credibility" and "clarity of information," whereas satisfaction primarily stems from high-quality presentation in "value expectation" and "content expressiveness." This highlights the core tension between attractiveness and authenticity in current cover design practices. Based on these insights, the study proposes a multi-stakeholder improvement path encompassing platform governance optimization, creator content guidelines, regulatory system enhancement, industry standard development, and user feedback mechanisms. Theoretically, this research extends the notion of e-commerce politeness from interpersonal interaction to human–computer interaction scenarios. Practically, it provides actionable guidance for optimizing visual interaction design and fostering a healthy content ecosystem on e-commerce platforms, offering valuable reference for the industry's transition from traffic competition to experience competition.*

KEYWORDS: *Content e-commerce platforms, Video covers, E-commerce politeness, User experience perception, Critical Incident Technique*

I.   INTRODUCTION

As user experience increasingly becomes the core source of competitive advantage, content e-commerce platforms (such as Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and Bilibili) are driving a profound transformation from traditional "transaction arenas" to modern "content communities." These platforms not only sell products but also construct a digital ecosystem centered on content, integrating information, sharing, and emotional connection. Here, consumption often begins not with a specific product but with diverse content created by users—tutorials, reviews, and experience sharing. This "discovery-driven shopping" model, where interest sparked by content leads to consumption, has become mainstream. Its healthy operation relies fundamentally on strong trust relationships among platforms, creators, and users.

Video covers, as the "first dialogue" between content and users in the information flow, serve purposes far beyond instant clicks. For platforms built on sharing and trust, the cover is the primary visual credential by which users judge the informational value, professionalism, and sincerity of creators. A high-quality cover provides an accurate preview and commitment to the content's value, whereas a misleading cover directly erodes user trust. However, under the intense competition for traffic, this crucial trust interface faces severe challenges. In pursuit of immediate click-through rates, many cover designs deviate from principles of

authenticity and clarity, creating systemic gaps between user expectations and actual content. Such widespread irregularities in cover design essentially represent a serious lack of *e-commerce politeness*. They not only damage users' single interaction experiences but also gradually erode the trust foundation of the platform's content ecosystem.

Grounded in the content ecosystem of e-commerce platforms, this study focuses on video covers as a critical interaction node in creator–user engagement. By innovatively introducing the perspective of *e-commerce politeness* and employing the Critical Incident Technique, it systematically collects and analyzes real user experiences with video covers. Through identifying and categorizing "polite" and "impolite" cover behaviors, the study reveals the core contradictions affecting user trust and experiential perception in this specific context. Ultimately, it aims to provide empirically grounded governance recommendations for building a respectful, trust-enhancing content e-commerce ecosystem.

II.   LITERATURE REVIE
2.1 Development and Current Status of Content E-Commerce Platforms

Content e-commerce platforms are the inevitable outcome of social commerce's deep optimization of user experience in competitive environments. Their core advantage lies in proactively building trust and driving consumption decisions through the creation and dissemination of valuable content. The rise of this model marks a critical transition in e-commerce—from being "transaction-centered" to becoming "relationship- and interaction-centered." Tracing its developmental trajectory, early research on social commerce focused on constructing macro-level theoretical frameworks to define its scope. For example, one study proposed an integrated framework encompassing business, technology, people, and information, laying the foundation for understanding social commerce [1]. Another study developed a classification system consisting of six elements—research themes, social media, and business activities—systematically outlining the research landscape of the field [2]. These pioneering works collectively revealed the essence of social commerce: commercial activities mediated by social media, empowered by Web 2.0 technologies and social interaction [3].

As industry practice and academic research advanced in parallel, the connotation and focus of social commerce began to evolve significantly. Systematic literature reviews indicate that research attention has shifted from broad conceptual frameworks to several core experiential elements. Among these, user behavior and platform (website) design have long been emphasized as dominant research topics [4] and [5]. Meanwhile , trust mechanisms, online reviews, and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM)—all closely tied to user experience—have attracted increasing scholarly attention [6]. Within this evolution, a new model has emerged that places "content" as the fundamental driver of consumer demand—content e-commerce platforms—whose uniqueness and importance have become increasingly prominent. Studies show that effective content marketing not only directly enhances brand trust and customer engagement [7] and [8], but also provides informational , entertainment, and social value, shaping positive consumer experience evaluations and indirectly strengthening brand loyalty [9]. On platforms such as TikTok Shop, the synergy between content marketing and E-WOM has been empirically confirmed as a powerful driver of purchase intention [10]and [11].

At the same time, the user experience of content e-commerce is highly dependent on platform functions and interaction modes. Research indicates that users' informational, entertainment, and parasocial experiences on platforms profoundly influence their commitment to both the platform and influencers, thereby driving purchase intention [12]. This pathway clearly outlines a "discovery shopping" scenario, where users initially have no explicit shopping goals but develop demand while browsing content. In such scenarios, livestream participation [13], influencer credibility [14], and intelligent recommendation systems [13]have be en empirically validated as key factors shaping user decisions. The design of these interactive elements directly determines the quality of "human-computer interaction" experiences. However, this content- and interaction- dependent business model also makes user experience highly vulnerable to "impolite" design. Research confirms that the quality and credibility of user-generated content are critical prerequisites for building consumer trust, which directly affects purchase decisions [15]. Conversely, empirical studies also show that effective content marketing significantly enhances perceived value and willingness to engage [16], implying that low-quality or intrusive content may fail to deliver positive experiences and even damage user relationships. Such practices undermine the experiential foundation built on perceived value and trust, constituting "impoliteness" in user experience.

Therefore, optimizing micro-level touchpoints of "human-computer interaction" and avoiding "impolite" design that harms user experience has become a key consensus for enhancing the core competitiveness of content e-commerce platforms. Reviewing existing research, scholars have analyzed the operational logic and experiential components of content e-commerce from macro frameworks, driving mechanisms (e.g., content marketing, E-WOM), and key functions (e.g., livestreaming, recommendation algorithms). Yet, the design of video covers—as the first visual touchpoint in the content ecosystem and the

starting point of "discovery shopping"—and their impact on users' "politeness experience" has not been systematically explored. Video covers serve as the primary interface where users form cognition, expectations, and decide whether to engage further. Their design quality directly shapes the "first impression" of user experience, acting as an early indicator of platform "politeness." This study aims to fill this research gap by focusing on video covers—an overlooked yet crucial micro-interaction element—and applying the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) to investigate how their design triggers users' perceptions of "politeness." This not only deepens research on user experience in content e-commerce platforms but also provides theoretical and practical guidance for optimizing initial interaction experiences and building a "polite" digital consumption environment.

2.2 Current Status and Applications of E-Commerce Politeness

With the rise of content e-commerce platforms, the core of user experience has shifted from mere functional realization to perceptions of interaction quality across the entire process. Within this shift, "e-commerce politeness" has emerged as a key construct attracting wide attention from both academia and industry. The theoretical foundation of e-commerce politeness originates from the field of human-computer interaction. Groundbreaking studies introduced concepts such as "polite computing" and "politeness in social software," emphasizing that software design must embody humanized attributes such as respect, transparency, and responsiveness to earn user trust and sustained engagement [17] and [18]. These works laid the theoretical groundwork for understanding the politeness attributes required of e-commerce platforms as interactive systems. Guided by this theory, researchers began systematically applying politeness frameworks to specific e-commerce contexts. For instance, one study examined service quality through the lens of politeness, constructing a user value co-creation model and empirically revealing the pathways through which politeness influences value co-creation, as well as the moderating role of platform type [19].

At the level of user-platform interactions, the absence of e-commerce politeness directly triggers negative psychological and behavioral responses. Pragmatic analyses of e-commerce complaints reveal that user dissatisfaction often stems from perceived "moral transgressions" by service agents, specifically violations of distributive and interactional justice [20]. This demonstrates that breaches of politeness can undermine trust relationships. Conversely, in livestream e-commerce—where real-time communication is central—positive politeness practices are critical to transaction success. Research shows that sellers effectively employ combinations of assertions, expressions, directives, commitments, and small talk to achieve persuasive politeness[21], highlighting how politeness is deeply embedded in the dynamic, emotional discourse of digital retail.

Furthermore, the scope of e-commerce politeness research has expanded across diverse platform types and business models, underscoring its broad applicability. From a system design perspective, studies argue that social technologies adopted by e-commerce platforms must integrate with social norms and technical implementations to achieve fair, collaborative, and transparent interaction experiences [22]. In logistics e-commerce, politeness practices have been identified as key to enhancing customer trust, satisfaction, and brand image [23]. In food delivery platforms, politeness issues in interface design, precise delivery, and human care significantly affect service quality perceptions [24]. In cross-border cooperation contexts, research based on reputation and trust perspectives confirms that corporate reputation promotes collaboration among cross-border e-commerce firms through partial mediation of trust, with politeness principles in information sharing playing a crucial role in building reliable partnerships [25].

In summary, existing studies have preliminarily constructed a research system for e-commerce politeness across multiple dimensions, including theoretical foundations, framework applications, psychological drivers, and cultural adaptation. These findings consistently demonstrate that e-commerce politeness is a composite concept spanning human-computer interaction design, platform service strategies, user psychological perceptions, and cross-cultural communication. Nevertheless, despite the growing richness of research, relatively little attention has been paid to the "video cover" as the initial visual touchpoint of politeness experience in content e-commerce platforms. As the visual gateway for users' first interaction with product content, video covers embody politeness attributes such as informational authenticity, visual friendliness, and respect for user choice—yet these remain underexplored. Accordingly, this study focuses on video covers in content e-commerce platforms, employing CIT to capture and analyze critical incidents that shape users' politeness experiences. By addressing this gap in the visual interface dimension of politeness, the study provides empirical evidence to guide content presentation strategies and enhance user experience.

III.   RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Critical Incident Technique (CIT)

CIT was first introduced by Flanagan in 1954 as a method for collecting and analyzing individuals' experiences of "critical incidents" perceived as exceptionally effective or ineffective in specific contexts,

thereby revealing core factors influencing behavior, performance, and experience. CIT provides a solid factual basis for understanding complex phenomena [26]. Owing to its strong practicality and flexibility, CIT has been widely applied across multiple disciplines.

In service research and quality management, the methodological system of CIT has been continuously refined and applied. For example, one study systematically reviewed 141 CIT applications, offering guidance to standardize its use and reporting, thereby greatly enhancing the rigor and comparability of subsequent research [27]. Another study advanced CIT theoretically by integrating psychological mechanisms of memory and judgment, critically examining the dynamic nature of "criticality," and proposing the "Criticality Critical Incident Technique" (CCIT) framework. This framework emphasizes the need to understand event criticality from the cognitive perspective of individual customers [28]. This theoretical progress provides crucial support for applying CIT in user experience research, highlighting that satisfaction or dissatisfaction is not determined solely by the event itself but is closely tied to personal memory, expectations, and judgment processes.

As research contexts extend into the digital world, the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) has likewise been proven effective in capturing human–computer interaction experiences. In the e-commerce context, studies have directly applied CIT to evaluate the service quality of a platform. By collecting customer descriptions of both positive and negative incidents, researchers were able to clearly identify the service touchpoints that led to satisfaction or dissatisfaction, thereby providing explicit directions for platform improvement [29]. In mobile application research, CIT has been further combined with situational theory. Findings reveal that users' behaviors following critical incidents—such as continued use, word-of-mouth communication, or complaints—are significantly associated with the specific situational context in which the incident occurred (e.g., location, social environment) [30]. This study strongly demonstrates that in digital human–computer interactions, user experience does not exist in isolation but is deeply embedded within its situational context.

In summary, prior research across service management, e-commerce, and information systems consistently validates the unique advantages and effectiveness of CIT in capturing, analyzing, and understanding users' subjective experiences and behavioral drivers. These studies not only establish a solid methodological foundation but also illustrate how CIT, by focusing on specific "critical moments," can reveal the deeper logic shaping overall experience. Building on this foundation, the present study adopts CIT to investigate the issue of "e-commerce politeness" in content e-commerce platforms. By collecting users' most memorable positive and negative critical incidents during their interactions with video covers, this study aims to systematically analyze the core factors influencing users' perceptions of politeness. In doing so, it provides empirical evidence grounded in real user experiences to inform the optimization of human–computer interaction design.

3.2 Research Design

This study extends the concept of "politeness" from traditional interpersonal interaction to the domain of human–computer interaction, specifically referring to the quality of interaction presented by digital platforms in engaging with users. Focusing on video covers as a critical touchpoint, the study examines whether their design, information delivery, and interaction guidance meet users' core requirements for efficiency, accuracy, and comfort. To achieve this, CIT was employed. Open-ended questions combining positive and negative perspectives were designed to systematically collect users' "most satisfactory" and "most unsatisfactory" critical incidents related to video covers, thereby uncovering deeper experiential and attitudinal tendencies.

For data collection, random sampling was adopted to cover user groups of different ages, regions, and usage habits through both online and offline channels. Questionnaire data were collected between July 26 and October 8, 2025. Ultimately, this study aims to systematically analyze user experiences to reveal the politeness performance of video covers on content e-commerce platforms, thereby providing a solid theoretical and practical foundation for optimizing cover design, enhancing human–computer interaction quality, and improving user satisfaction.

IV.   DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Data Collection and Processing

Based on CIT, this study collected a total of 316 raw data entries through questionnaires. To ensure accuracy and validity in subsequent analysis, all data were rigorously screened and verified. A total of 76 entries were excluded due to vague content, irrelevance to video covers, or failure to meet the definition of critical incidents. Ultimately, 240 valid critical incidents were retained, providing a reliable data foundation for exploring politeness experiences on content e-commerce platforms. Among these valid incidents, 120 reflected users' "most satisfactory" experiences and 120 reflected "most unsatisfactory" experiences. This balanced dataset ensured robust comparative analysis of positive and negative dimensions, enabling the study to reveal both strengths and weaknesses of video covers in terms of e-commerce politeness.

4.2 Classification Principles

The classification in this study was primarily based on users' feedback regarding critical incidents in their interactions with video covers on content e-commerce platforms, with emphasis on user perceptions. Through systematic analysis and organization of the collected incidents, five core categories were identified for each type of experience— "most satisfactory" and "most unsatisfactory." The specific category names and detailed explanations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Classification of Critical Incidents and Their Explanations

Satisfactory Incident Categories	Definition	Unsatisfactory Incident Categories	Definition
Visual Appeal (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory)	The user's first impression and intuitive perception of the overall visual presentation of the cover.		
Content Expressiveness	The overall quality and tonal atmosphere of the content as perceived by the user through the cover's visual presentation.	Content Appropriateness	The extent to which the video cover content aligns with the user's moral standards, societal norms, and platform expectations.
Brand Recognizability	The user's ability to identify a specific creator or series of content through distinctive elements in the cover.	Credibility	The retrospective evaluation of consistency between the promises implied by the cover and the actual video content.
Information Clarity (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory)	The ease and speed with which users understand the video's theme and core information conveyed by the cover.		
Value Expectation (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory)	The user's anticipation, based on the cover, of the specific benefits or emotional satisfaction the video content may provide.		

4.3 Reliability and Validity Testing

Reliability is a key indicator for assessing whether a research method or tool can produce stable and consistent results across different contexts. It is essential for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of research conclusions. Within the Critical Incident Technique (CIT), reliability analysis of classification typically involves two core dimensions: (1) the individual consistency of each classifier, and (2) the inter-rater consistency among classifiers [26].

4.3.1 Individual Classification Consistency

Individual classification consistency is a critical measure of the extent to which different raters categorize critical incidents in a consistent manner. It directly affects the objectivity and reliability of research data. When the consistency coefficient among two or more raters exceeds 0.8, the classification results can be considered to have ideal stability and consistency [26]. In this study, three experts with professional backgrounds in relevant fields were invited to participate in the classification process simultaneously: a university lecturer specializing in e-commerce, a senior operator from a content e-commerce platform, and a successful content creator. The analysis results (see Table 2) show that the consistency coefficients of the three experts for both satisfactory and unsatisfactory incidents were all above 0.8, indicating that the classification results meet the reliability requirements.

Table 2 Number of Individual Consistencies and Individual Classification Consistency of Raters

Events	Satisfactory Incidents		Unsatisfactory Incidents	
	Number of Individual Consistencies	Individual Classification Consistency	Number of Individual Consistencies	Individual Classification Consistency
Rater 1	100	0.833	97	0.808
Rater 2	104	0.867	101	0.842
Rater 3	98	0.817	98	0.817

4.3.2 Inter-Rater Consistency

Inter-rater consistency is used to measure the degree of agreement among different raters when classifying critical incidents, serving as an important indicator for ensuring research reliability. Since the Critical Incident Technique relies on the subjective judgment of raters, testing inter-rater consistency is as crucial as assessing individual classification consistency. When multiple raters categorize incidents according to established standards, the level of agreement directly determines the credibility of the research. A higher level of consistency indicates that the classification criteria are clear and the classification process is reliable. To ensure rigor in classification, this study conducted two rounds of classification at two different time points (with a 14-day interval). The summarized results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Number of Inter-Rater Consistencies

Events	Satisfactory Incidents			Unsatisfactory Incidents		
Raters	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3
Rater 1	100	--	--	97	--	--
Rater 2	87	104	--	82	101	--
Rater 3	86	83	86	84	78	98

Using the reliability analysis method proposed by Holsti, this study verifies the degree of classification consistency among multiple raters [31]. The calculation formulas are presented as Formula (1) and Formula (2).

$$R = \frac{(N \times A)}{1 + [(N-1) \times A]} \quad (1)$$

$$A = \frac{\frac{2M_{12}}{n_1 + n_2} + \frac{2M_{23}}{n_2 + n_3} + \frac{2M_{13}}{n_1 + n_3}}{N} \quad (2)$$

R = Reliability
N = Number of raters
A = Average level of inter-rater consistency
M = Number of identical classifications among raters
n = Number of samples classified by each rater
Based on the formulas, the following results were obtained, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Classification Reliability Table

	Average Level of Inter-Rater Consistency (A)	Reliability (R)
Satisfactory Incidents	0.848	0.944
Unsatisfactory Incidents	0.824	0.934

The research results show that the reliability values exceeded 0.9, meeting the requirements set by scholars. This indicates that the inter-rater consistency among the three classifiers demonstrates sufficient reliability and can be considered acceptable.

4.3.3 Validity Analysis

Validity analysis is a critical step in evaluating whether a research method can accurately measure the target concept, playing an essential role in ensuring the scientific rigor and reliability of research findings. To guarantee methodological rigor, this study systematically examines validity from three dimensions: expert validity, content validity, and face validity. The details are as follows:

4.3.3.1 Expert Validity

Expert validity refers to the evaluation of the measurement tools by specialists in relevant fields to assess their professionalism, rationality, and scientific soundness, thereby ensuring that the tools accurately reflect the research theme and conform to academic standards. Prior studies have emphasized that the most commonly used evaluation tools for given structures and functions should undergo expert review for content validity [32]. Accordingly, this study invited three experts with diverse professional backgrounds—including a professor specializing in e-commerce, a senior operator of a content e-commerce platform, and a successful content creator—to jointly evaluate the validity of the collected critical incident data and make appropriate revisions. This process ensured that the study achieved strong expert validity.

4.3.3.2 Content Validity

Content validity assesses the relevance and comprehensiveness of the research content in relation to the research theme, i.e., whether the study sufficiently covers all aspects of the topic and accurately reflects its core elements [33]. This study employed the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) [26] to systematically analyze the representativeness and logical consistency of the collected satisfactory and unsatisfactory incidents at the content level. The analysis results indicate that the critical incident data effectively encompass all core aspects of user experience with video covers on content e-commerce platforms, aligning with the research objectives and demonstrating strong content validity.

4.3.3.3 Face Validity

Face validity concerns how measurement items are perceived by respondents, evaluating whether the tool appears, on the surface, to be relevant to the research theme [34]. In this study, open-ended questionnaires were used to collect users' authentic experiential data regarding video covers on content e-commerce platforms. The data were explained using intuitive category labels and concrete examples, enabling even non-specialist readers to clearly understand the meaning and logic of the classifications. The collected data broadly covered the entire process of user interaction with video covers, including first impressions when browsing recommendation pages, predicting content value through covers, identifying creator brands, and retrospective evaluations of cover authenticity after viewing the content. These scenarios align with the interaction characteristics of content e-commerce platforms, where visual content serves as a critical touchpoint. Based on this, the study concludes that the data exhibit strong face validity.

4.4 Classification Results

This study divided both satisfactory and unsatisfactory incidents into five categories. Representative critical incidents were extracted from each category for illustration, as shown in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5 Examples of Satisfactory Incidents

Visual Appeal	In the video cover of the game Genshin Impact version PV or character demo, the moment of a character's ultimate move is selected, combined with dazzling light effects and a shattered background. The strong color contrast and dynamic impact immediately attract us as Genshin Impact players.
Content Expressiveness	The cover of the Bilibili creator "Luo Xiang Talks About Criminal Law" incorporates the character "Zhang San" as a design element, along with humorous text. At first glance, it is immediately recognizable as Luo Xiang's video.
Brand Recognizability	The cover of the Bilibili creator "Luo Xiang Talks About Criminal Law" incorporates the character "Zhang San" as a design element, along with humorous text. At first glance, it is immediately recognizable as Luo Xiang's video.
Information Clarity	On the brand advertisement cover, a cute little girl is eating dumplings, with large ancient-style clerical script stating "We support Chinese dumplings for heritage listing," directly highlighting the theme.
Value Expectation	The science popularization cover uses a left–right comparison composition (eating bread in the subway vs. office setting), with the title "From a monthly salary of 3k to 30k, I only changed one habit!" This makes me believe it is "low-cost and replicable."

Table 6 Examples of Unsatisfactory Incidents

Visual Appeal	Some video covers have very low resolution and are extremely blurry, showing only a vague outline of an animal. They fail to clearly present the video's subject, leaving me with no desire to click and watch.
Content Appropriateness	Some platform-pushed covers contain borderline content, even targeting user groups that include minors. At times, searching normal keywords yields very different content depending on gender. Such practices may negatively affect minors' physical and mental health and violate public norms.
Credibility	The video cover used fake, unreleased movie stills with a yellow background and red text stating "Final Episode: Everyone Dies!" (though the actual plot contained no such event). Despite exceeding ten million views, 95% of comments were negative, such as "Clickbait" and "Unsubscribe." The video received over 120,000 reports and was eventually forcibly removed by the platform.
Information Clarity	A science account released a video titled "The Ultimate Mystery of the Universe," with a cover showing a PPT screenshot filled with dense formulas in tiny black text, making the

	title nearly unreadable.
Value Expectation	The cover is a plain photo of a city street, with no landmarks or distinctive elements. The title is simply "Travel Guide," offering nothing unique and leaving me with no desire to watch.

A preliminary statistical analysis of the classification data was conducted to understand user feedback across different categories, as shown in Table 7 and Table 8.

Table 7 Summary of Satisfactory Incidents Classifications

	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3	Average	Rank
Visual Appeal	17	9	13	13	4
Content Expressiveness	29	34	29	30.67	2
Brand Recognizability	9	9	11	9.67	5
Information Clarity	25	28	27	26.67	3
Value Expectation	40	40	49	40	1

The analysis of satisfactory incidents reveals that the core drivers of users' positive experiences are, in order: value expectation (mean = 40, ranked first), content expressiveness (mean = 30.67, ranked second), and information clarity (mean = 26.67, ranked third). This ranking indicates that when video covers can accurately signal content value, effectively convey content quality through visual language, and provide clear and comprehensible information, users show strong recognition. Notably, visual appeal (mean = 13, ranked fourth) holds a relatively secondary position in satisfaction, suggesting that mere aesthetic attractiveness is no longer the ultimate pursuit of users, but rather must serve the core function of value communication.

Table 8 Summary of Unsatisfactory Incident Classifications

	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3	Average	Rank
Visual Appeal	23	19	22	21.33	3
Content Appropriateness	12	17	8	12.33	4
Credibility	50	43	51	48	1
Information Clarity	26	35	24	28.33	2
Value Expectation	9	6	15	10	5

In contrast, the data on unsatisfactory incidents present markedly different characteristics. Users' negative experiences are highly concentrated in two fundamental dimensions: credibility (mean = 48, ranked first) and information clarity (mean = 28.33, ranked second). This finding indicates that when video covers fail to meet these basic requirements of authenticity and clarity, they constitute the most severe form of "impolite" behavior. Specifically, issues such as "cover fraud" and "inconsistent text and image" directly undermine the foundation of user trust, while ambiguity and confusion in information delivery significantly increase users' cognitive burden. It is noteworthy that the value expectation category ranks lowest (mean = 10, ranked fifth). However, this does not imply that users disregard value perception; rather, when covers cannot even guarantee the basic requirements of credibility and clarity, users' higher-level demand for "value resonance" is substantially suppressed. This finding provides a clear strategic path for platform optimization: credibility and clarity must be prioritized to build a foundation of trust; only on this basis can improvements in content expressiveness and value expectation achieve an upgrade from "usable" to "truly useful" user experiences.

These findings have direct implications for the sustainable development of content e-commerce platforms. Persistent failures in credibility and information clarity of video covers not only lead to user attrition and declining conversion rates, thereby directly impacting economic performance, but also erode user trust over time, ultimately undermining the platform's social value and brand equity. Therefore, platform optimization strategies require fundamental adjustment, with resources prioritized toward establishing a truthful and transparent cover content system and systematically enhancing the accuracy and readability of information delivery. Only by repositioning video covers from "traffic bait" to "value messengers" can platforms effectively resolve the current experiential crisis and transform covers into a competitive advantage that supports long-term development.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on a systematic analysis of 240 valid critical incidents, the study finds that user dissatisfaction is highly concentrated in the two fundamental dimensions of credibility and information clarity, while user satisfaction primarily derives from the high-quality realization of value expectation and content expressiveness. This reveals the core contradiction in current video cover design: in pursuing visual appeal and value expectation, platforms and creators have neglected credibility and clarity—the cornerstones of user experience. To address this, collaborative efforts are required to build a more "polite" content e-commerce ecosystem.

To systematically resolve this contradiction and construct a healthy, sustainable content e-commerce ecosystem, figure 1). This framework clarifies the core responsibilities and interactive relationships among five key stakeholders—regulatory authorities, industry organizations, platforms, creators, and users—working together to build an ecosystem of e-commerce politeness that better meets user experience expectations.
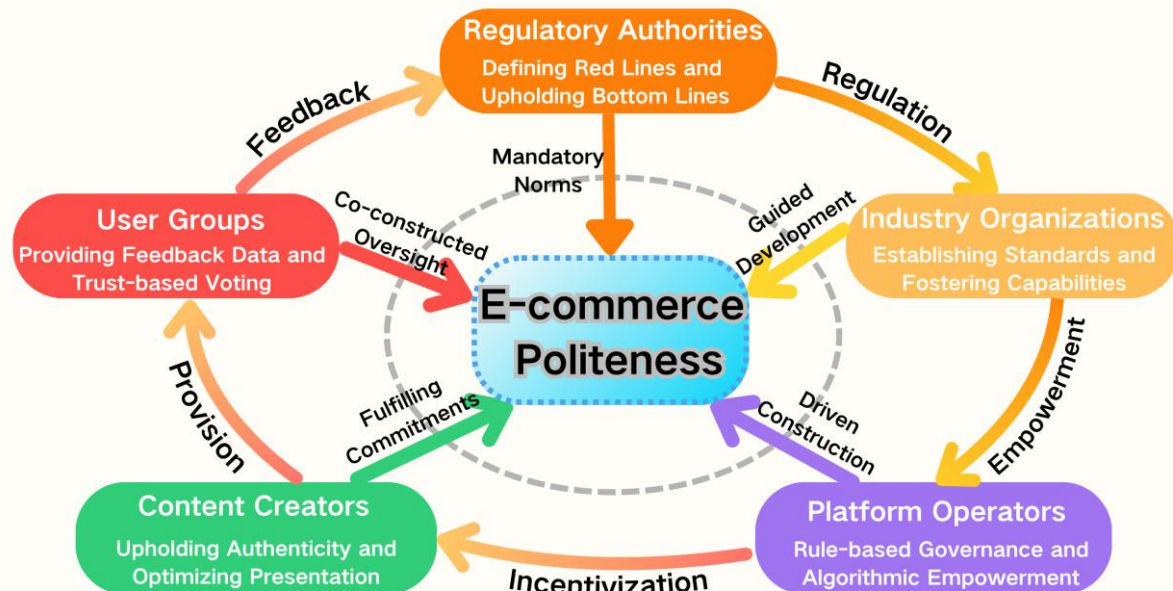
Figure1: Collaborative Governance Framework for Content E-Commerce Platforms Based on "E-Commerce Politeness"

5.1 Regulatory Authorities: Governance of Typical Violations and Refinement of Regulations

Regulatory authorities should attach great importance to the typical "impolite" behaviors and their potential risks revealed in this study. First, regarding credibility, the primary source of user dissatisfaction, and content appropriateness, which, although less frequently reported, carries high social harm (e.g., "using images of minors to convey inappropriate implications" or "public disclosure of personal privacy"), regulatory authorities need to improve specialized regulations in the field of content e-commerce. They should clarify the legal boundaries of video covers as commercial promotional media and establish more targeted standards for sensitive sectors such as health, education, and finance. Second, authorities should establish routine monitoring and rapid response mechanisms, leveraging technology to enhance the identification of typical violations such as "cover fraud" and "inconsistent text and image." Verified cases should be subject to tiered penalties to strengthen deterrence, thereby protecting consumer rights, preventing substantive harm, and delineating clear legal red lines for healthy industry development.

5.2 Industry Organizations: Establishing Standards and Promoting Capacity Building

Industry organizations can play a key role in bridging policy and practice based on the study's findings. First, to address issues such as insufficient information clarity, design homogenization, and limited professional competence among some creators, industry organizations can lead collaboration among platforms, experienced creators, and design experts to jointly develop Guidelines for Content E-Commerce Video Cover Design. These guidelines would provide professional references for information hierarchy, font size, and visual element coordination, thereby improving the efficiency of information delivery. Second, industry organizations should systematically conduct professional training and ethics education for creators. Training should cover how to balance visual appeal and information clarity, how to shape value expectation and content expressiveness without distortion, and how to uphold the long-term commercial value of credibility, reducing "impolite" designs caused by insufficient skills or short-term profit motives.

5.3 Platforms: Building Trust-Centered Mechanisms and Algorithmic Guidance

As the core of ecosystem governance, platforms should integrate the key issues reflected in the research data into their governance frameworks and product design. First, to address credibility, platforms must establish stricter mechanisms for verifying the authenticity of cover content, combining AI recognition with

manual sampling audits to detect issues such as "using fake movie stills" or "excessive beautification distortion." A creator credit evaluation system should be linked to these checks, making cover authenticity a key factor in account weighting and traffic allocation. Second, to improve information clarity, platforms can provide cover design assistance tools, such as template libraries, information hierarchy checks, and font clarity reminders, helping creators—especially novices—avoid common problems like text overload and chaotic layouts. Finally, platforms should explicitly incorporate multidimensional cover quality indicators, particularly credibility and information clarity, into recommendation algorithm weighting. This ensures that high-quality content adhering to principles of authenticity, clarity, and appropriateness receives greater exposure incentives, while systematically suppressing "clickbait" and "cover fraud," guiding the ecosystem toward healthy competition.

5.4 Content Creators: Balancing Value Commitment and Content Authenticity

Content creators should reassess their strategies based on the research data, shifting from short-term click-seeking to long-term trust-building. Although value expectation is the primary driver of user satisfaction, its realization must rest on a solid foundation of credibility. Positive cases—such as "precise left-right comparison compositions" or "authentic food close-ups"—demonstrate that sincere value previews are far more enduringly attractive than exaggerated titles. Therefore, creators must first uphold the baseline of content authenticity, strictly avoiding any mismatch between covers and actual content, as a single deceptive experience can lead to permanent user loss. Second, creators should enhance content expressiveness and information clarity, using consistent colors, fonts, and layouts to build distinctive brand recognizability, enabling users to quickly identify and trust content amid information overload. Additionally, creators should actively learn and apply platform tools and industry guidelines to optimize information delivery efficiency, ensuring that core value points are instantly captured and understood by users, thereby achieving a sustainable balance between attracting clicks and safeguarding user experience.

5.5 User Groups: Leveraging Feedback Rights to Promote Ecosystem Optimization

As the ultimate perceivers and experiencers of "e-commerce politeness," user groups play a vital role in driving ecosystem optimization through active feedback. The study finds that users' strong focus on credibility provides the clearest direction for platform governance. Users should fully and rationally utilize platform functions such as reporting, rating, and commenting to provide specific and accurate feedback on "impolite" covers, especially issues like "cover fraud" and "inappropriate content." This feedback offers valuable data support for platforms to identify problematic content and implement precise governance. Furthermore, users can actively support creators who adhere to principles of authenticity, clarity, and professionalism through positive interactions such as likes, favorites, shares, and sustained following, thereby fostering a healthy content ecosystem that emphasizes long-term value and social responsibility. Users may also participate in user experience surveys initiated by platforms or research institutions, transforming their perceptions and expectations of "politeness" in video covers into constructive input for product design and community rule optimization.

Summary In conclusion, governance of the "politeness" experience in content e-commerce video covers is a systemic project involving technology, regulation, ethics, and culture. Through regulatory authorities setting red lines and strengthening enforcement, industry organizations establishing standards and empowering individuals, platforms building mechanisms and guiding algorithms, creators upholding authenticity and enhancing professionalism, and users providing active feedback and rational choices, a collaborative governance system can be formed based on the specific issues and data insights revealed in this study. This system can effectively resolve the core contradictions in current cover design, systematically enhance users' perception of "politeness" in their experiences, and ultimately drive the content e-commerce industry from extensive traffic competition toward a high-quality, trust- and experience-centered path of sustainable development.

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