

Analysis on the Marketing Strategy of Cultural and Creative IP Brands

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Abstract: In order to promote the construction of domestic cultural and creative IP, the case analysis method is used to analyze its marketing strategy from four aspects of cultural marketing, scene marketing, product strategy and cross-border marketing, and to provide brand marketing path analysis for the development of domestic cultural and creative IP. After analysis, the construction of cultural and creative IP is inseparable from the cultural connotation of IP itself and the establishment of contact with consumers. Therefore, cultural and creative IP should enrich its own brand marketing strategy while enriching its own brand connotation.

Keywords: IP; cultural creativity; marketing strategy

1. Introduction

With the development of the times, the enrichment of material life and the rise of new media, people are paying more and more attention to the individualization and aestheticization of consumption, and society has entered a new consumption era. Traditional cultural and creative products are mostly peripheral products of major film and television dramas and animations. Nowadays, in order to spread their own image and culture, more and more media are turning to the creation of their own IP image. This article will take the cultural and creative IP “My King and Sleep” as a case to analyze its IP creation and marketing methods, and provide a reference for the development of my country’s cultural and creative enterprises.

IP is a concept that has migrated from the IT industry terminology to the cultural and artistic circles. The “IP” that is hotly discussed in the cultural industry mainly refers to intellectual property [1]. Cultural creative IP builds a picture, a role or a story into a brand, and gives it commercial value and communication value, and finally completes commercial realization. [2]

With the shortening of product life cycle and consumption popular cycle, people’s consumption concept has begun to develop from paying attention to material consumption to material and spiritual consumption, paying more attention to the personalization and aestheticization of products [3]. Cultural and creative products, as high value-added products produced by creatives recreating cultural resources and cultural goods [4], usually have more

distinctive signs and symbols, and people consume them more to show Personality and good taste.

Therefore, cultural and creative marketing in the context of new media first needs to strengthen cultural symbols, and use its core information to build a clear brand image [5], and ultimately make the brand a clue to consumers’ search memory, prompting them to be in the cultural and creative product category. Select a specific product object in [6]. Secondly, excellent cultural and creative products need to meet the aesthetic needs of different groups of people. Therefore, the development of IP consumer end needs to innovate the image and content, and find the product positioning that matches the IP image, which is the basis for ensuring the reliability of the carrier Let the IP image get the maximum display [7].

For the IP industry chain, a good story is just the beginning. The follow-up development of content, user recognition and the creation of peripheral products are the core of building the IP ecological chain [7]. On the one hand, story marketing is full of emotions, which has changed the traditional sales relationship between brands and consumers. On the other hand, stories have the characteristics of strong dissemination. Story-like marketing messages can be freely disseminated in interactive communities, thereby strengthening the emotional connection between users and the brand [8].

In the future cultural and creative market, the cultural heritage of the IP brand will become the core of the competitiveness of cultural and creative products [9], and large-scale cross-industry cooperation will also occur in various products. Through the mutual penetration and integration of different industries, brands can achieve mutual contrast and interpretation, so that the overall brand image and brand association of the company are more tense, so that both parties can obtain greater brand value from it [10].

2. The Background of the Case Brand

2.1. Brand Introduction

Illustrator Bai Cha founded the “Wuhuang Sleeps” brand in 2015, and then founded Yijian Universe (Beijing) Culture Co., Ltd. in 2016 to build “Wuhuang Sleeps” as an animation IP for operation. Yijian Universe Company uses IP to carry out a series of offline themed activities, self-media operations, and IP derivatives, etc.; operates the official WeChat public account to push users with

animation content similar to the comic form from time to time; opens flagship stores on major e-commerce platforms to sell products derived from “Wuhuang” IP.

2.2. Brand Growth Path

2.2.1. 2006-2013: Brand development period

During this period, the author Bai Cha created and published many commercial illustrations on ZCOOL. In 2013, Baicha released a lot of cat-related illustrations on ZCOOL, mainly in cute style.

2.2.2. 2014-2017: Brand accumulation period

In 2015, “Wuhuang” began to become popular on the Internet. Its representative picture book “Like the Way You Can’t Get Used to Me and Can’t Kill Me” sold more than 2 million copies. In 2016, the co-founder, Wei Jing, started a series of commercial development explorations on “Wuhuang” and established “Yijian Universe (Beijing) Culture Co., Ltd.” to build the “Wuhuang Sleeps” brand. The company will carry out content production and marketing around the role IP of “Wuhuang” and “Bazaar”. In 2017, “Wuhuang” officially expanded from online 2D to 3D experience and began an offline theme tour.

2.2.3. 2018 to 2020: Mature stage

During this period, “Wuhuang Sleeps” followed up the trademark registration work, and at the same time, Yijian Universe continued to expand Wuhuang’s cross-border cooperation business, achieved a variety of cross-border marketing, and rapidly expanded brand influence. As of 2020, “Wuhuang” has accumulated cooperation with nearly 100 world and regional giants, covering various industries and categories such as e-commerce platforms, catering, fashion, etc. In 2019, “Wuhuang” won the title of “2018 China IP” issued by the International Licensing Association LINA.

3. Brand Marketing Strategy Analysis

3.1. Cultural Marketing

The cultural creative industry is an industry that uses creativity and talent to apply cultural elements to commodities to obtain commercial value. Therefore, cultural and creative products derived from unique cultural characteristics will have a larger consumer market. “Wuhuang Sleeps” sets brand marketing on a cultural basis with different characteristics, expanding the breadth of cultural marketing.

3.1.1. The community foundation of “cat culture”

According to statistics from the “White Paper on China’s Pet Industry in 2018”, cat culture is mainly for office workers born in the 80s and 90s, and pet owners also tend to be younger. The trend of younger consumers and their strong spending power have provided excellent soil for the growth of the “Wuhuang” brand.

The creation team of “My King Sleeps” uses the specific IP image of cats to deeply touch people’s underlying consciousness. The popularity of “Wuhuang”

is influenced by multiple factors of contemporary trend culture, market function, and policy direction, but what guarantees its vigor is the result of the core value driving behind the story, including love and companionship.

3.1.2. The shaping of personality traits

Personalization is one of the important characteristics of IP. Judging from Bai Cha’s creative experience, the success of “Wuhuang” lies in the author’s shaping of its personality. Tsundere is the most prominent personality trait of “Wuhuang”. It has the personality of a cat and the cunning and transcendence of human nature. In addition, the beloved traits of “Wu Huang”, such as loyalty, assertiveness and kindness, are gradually established and enriched in the subsequent works of Bai Cha.

The cross-border fusion of the techniques of comics and the concept of cute pets makes young people have a strong resonance. The set characteristics of “My Emperor” and his daily life stories can make the audience feel immersed.

3.1.3. Perseverance of “responsible art”

Yijian Universe Company continues to focus on pet adoption and also helps stray animals find homes by mobilizing fans. In 2015, the company organized an offline promotion event in conjunction with Beijing Pet Adoption Day. In 2016, “Wuhuang” and “Bazaar” became volunteers on Beijing Adoption Day. The company has repeatedly called people to pay attention to stray animals through public platforms such as Weibo, take the initiative to adopt and take care of stray animals. Through these activities, the company has shaped the correct values of the brand, and proactively assumed social responsibilities and obligations. Adherence to social responsibility has strengthened the brand influence of “Wuhuang” and improved consumer brand loyalty.

3.1.4. The leverage of “cp culture”

CP (coupling) refers to the role pairing in which there is a romantic relationship in the work. Nowadays, CP has gradually expanded to the real world, and its connotation is not only set in love relationships, but can be used to generally refer to all pairing relationships or some kind of intimate relationship.

Yijian Universe Company caters to the trend of contemporary culture, combining “Wuhuang” and “Bazahe” into “CP”, which frequently appear in the joint marketing campaigns of major brands. The various loving interactions between the powerful and arrogant “Wuhuang” and the loyal and honest “Bazaar” not only successfully shaped the two characters’ distinctively complementary personalities, but also increased their attraction.

After experiencing the exhaustion of life and emotional confusion, people satisfies their inner yearning for beautiful love by watching the love and interaction of others and finally take care of themselves, adding a little comfort to the ordinary life. Yijian Universe Company chooses to leverage CP culture and conforms to the trend of cultural development under the background of the

times, and this is one of the reasons why it has strong vitality in the contemporary FMCG atmosphere.

3.1.5. Continuous high-quality content output

“My Emperor Wants to Sleep” continuously enriches content in breadth and depth. The number of roles has expanded from the three roles of “My Emperor”, Dad, and Junior to eleven. The creative content has also changed from simple fun and resonance to love, growth, and affection, and began to pay attention to the social problems such as stray animals. Continuous re-innovation of content not only enhances the readability of the work, but also further enhances user loyalty

3.2. Scene Marketing

The marketing method that creates a specific scene to encourage consumers to produce consumption behavior is scene marketing, which better matches products and consumer needs and promotes sales and purchases. “Wuhuang Sleeps” focuses on creating panoramic scenes and connecting online IP to offline theme sales models to achieve expanded marketing.

Taking the “Wuhuang’s Arrival--Adorable Master Audience Conference” as an example, based on the concept of creating full-scene interaction, this tour set up a large number of interactive DP points for fans to take pictures and share, and also intimately set up a gallery of comics and consumption areas. Offline activities mainly revolve around full-scenario marketing and brand crossovers. Specific to the landing of each activity, it is often accompanied by personalized re-creation. In different regions, Yijiang Universe will also design landmarks in events, turning the flat content on books and mobile phones into offline realistic, interactive and immersive scenes, allowing fans to find traces of comics in the exhibition

Through the online + offline linkage, Yijiang Universe connects online experience with offline experience, creates a unique audio-visual experience, establishes unique brand IP characteristics, and adds new relationships with consumers. This kind of emotional connection not only makes the brand concept of “My King Sleeps” deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, it also reflects its unique IP strength and value.

3.3. Product Strategy

Product portfolio strategy is a strategy for an enterprise to optimally combine a variety of products produced and operated for the market. “Wuhuang Sleeps” implements the product portfolio strategy from three directions so that the breadth, depth and relevance of the product portfolio are in the best structure to improve the competitiveness and economic benefits of “Wuhuang” IP.

3.3.1. Expand the breadth of product portfolio

The digital native content of “Wuhuang Sleeps” presents a diversified development, covering stickers, emoticons and short videos, etc., all have gained continuous traffic attention and image exposure. The Long Tail Effect of this strategy is significant, greatly

enhancing the stickiness of fans. And the company’s active platforms involve Tik Tok, Bilibili, Weibo, etc., and its content has achieved efficient dissemination through the leverage effect of the platform

3.3.2. Develop the depth of product portfolio

“Wuhuang Sleeps” IP mainly realizes the deep expansion of product portfolio through advertising, in the form of posters, comics, short videos, etc. For example, the company collaborated with Yili to shoot an animated advertisement, with Burberry to create a cartoon, and with Vinda Paper Towel to design a graphic poster. In addition to such products, the company also continuously taps the depth of IP by authorizing IP images and selling derivative products.

3.3.3. Strengthen product relevance

“Wuhuang Sleeps” has a rich variety of derivatives, and Taobao flagship store is one of the main sales channels for these derivatives. Most of the derivatives are products independently designed and produced by the company, and products such as mobile phone cases and notebooks are very popular. In July 2016, “My King Sleeps” ranked second in the “Taobao Top Ten Original IPs”. Under the weak operation of Taobao stores, the average customer unit price was 160 yuan. In 2017, sales reached nearly 10 million yuan.

3.4. Cross-border Marketing

Cross-border marketing is a marketing method that allows originally irrelevant elements to penetrate and merge with each other, thereby giving a brand a sense of three-dimensionality and depth. In the past 4 years, “Wuhuang Sleeps” has achieved open and diverse cross-border marketing with many brands, covering beauty, catering, cultural creativity, fashion and other industries and categories.

3.4.1. Beauty industry: Innisfree

Based on the characteristics of Innisfree’s products and combined with its own IP characteristics, “Wuhuang Sleeps” has designed 6 brand IP cooperation products, 13 customized screens in 2018. With the exquisite Chinese-style ink painting and the unique “Wuhuang Sleeps” Quotations, this marketing has created a new consumption hotspot for the consumer market. This marketing can not only use the IP popularity of “My King” to turn traffic into Innisfree product sales, but also expand the exposure and popularity of IP through the increase in Innisfree brand sales

3.4.2. Catering industry: Yoshinoya

In 2018, “My King Sleeps” and Yoshinoya launched a full-line product linkage, and the two partnered to create a more joyful and immersive dining experience for customers. Interesting character lines such as “The cows blown in those years have finally eaten it” and “Two more bowls are good” are displayed in every corner of the restaurant. The high degree of compatibility between the two parties from consumer users to life needs has

touched the consumption tendency of young people, enabling brand integration and operation to complement each other, enabling online IP to empower offline stores with its own traffic advantages, thus forming a closed loop of traffic feedback.

3.4.3. Cultural and creative industry: Cultural and creative of the Palace Museum

“My Emperor Wanshui” teamed up with the Forbidden City to create a new cultural and creative product based on traditional culture. The combination of two cultural creative IPs can give full play to each other’s strongest content and advantages. The two jointly created a series of derivative products based on “Wuhuang” and the Forbidden City IP. Starting from a variety of crafts such as ceramics, cloisonne, purple sand, embroidery, lacquer, etc., the two used the business model of “culture + products” and achieved a deep cooperation of IP authorization .

4. Conclusion

This article mainly analyzes the “Wuhuang Sleeps” brand based on the construction of cultural and creative IP and marketing strategy. “Wuhuang Sleeps” caters to the trend of cultural trends, using the unique cultural foundation of the brand to carry out cultural marketing and exporting brand culture; diversify the creation of a series of products, continuously optimize the product portfolio to tap its commercial value; interact with brands in various fields, Complement each other. The company accurately combines a personalized brand image with specific scenarios, interacts with consumer groups from online to offline, and establishes emotional resonance, which ultimately increases customer retention and loyalty.

In the cultural and creative market with increasingly fierce competition in the future, the exchanges, cooperation and integration between industries will undoubtedly give new ideas for the long-term development of brands, and how to use brand synergy to maximize brand value, strengthen IP brand image in multiple dimensions and enhance brand influence is worthy of deep exploration by cultural and creative brands.

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