

On the Development of Library IP

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Abstract: In the ever-changing internet environment, super IP came into being. It is born with huge cross-industry influence and real value, and it is a "virtual" product that can bring huge benefits. From the perspective of super IP, this article analyzes the development possibilities of collection IP, and explores how to better promote and operate libraries based on the inspiration of the development of Suzhou Museum collection IP, so as to promote cultural innovation and better play the role of spreading excellent culture on the basis of building a reading promotion brand.

Keywords: collection IP; library; Suzhou museum

1. Introduction

Culture is lauded as a pivotal driver of consumption upgrade. As an important medium for mass cultural dissemination, the library is not only a crucial carrier of national memory and culture, but also an essential source for people to gain knowledge. Whilst protecting and passing down excellent traditional cultures, we must also follow the overarching trend of the times and develop more new carriers best aligned to the needs of the times in the form of cultural and creative products, which can be gradually made the new "ambassadors" of Chinese culture.

In the cultural and creative industries, cultural and creative companies tend to draw traffic and gain markets by exploiting and reshaping their intellectual property (IP). Based on the current characteristics of various super IP, this paper attempts to explore the possibility of exploiting library IP, and takes Suzhou Museum as an example to summarize and analyze the status quo of China's cultural and creative industries, thereby informing the spread of mass culture and the extended development of IP brands, and putting forth the corresponding suggestions and measures to shore up the prosperous development of the library IP derived cultural and creative products.

2. Theoretical Basis for the Development of Library IP

2.1. What is IP

While the intellectual property is abbreviated as IP, the connotations of IP have been continuously expanded in the wake of the burgeoning development of the Internet. In the realm of Internet, IP can be understood as all

famous cultural and creative works (i.e., literature, film, animation, etc.), or can be comprehended as any products that bring noteworthy effects.

2.2. Cultural and Creative IP

Boasting its own value and cultural appeal, IP in the cultural industry generally has tremendous influence and an awe-inspiring fan base. IP of this type is often associated with a broad spectrum of cultural resources and present a wide array of derivative forms, such as museum IP, library IP, etc., which would eventually evolve into concrete symbols of a certain culture.

2.3. Library IP

2.3.1. Feasibility of operating library IP

The successful commercialization of IP hinges largely on the entry point of its creators. For example, Suzhou Museum builds success on its own collections and the long-accumulated popularity, while Beijing Longquan Monastery relies on the creative two-dimensional comic works of the masters [1]. The feasibility of operating library IP lies in the resource base and the architectural design of the library itself. In the following, the author will discuss from two perspective: internal environment and external environment.

Internal environment. The vast number of books make the greatest assets of the library. Therefore, to forge a successful brand image for library IP, we must avail ourselves of the massive book collections in a creative way. Of course, infrastructures such as the library's building also lend a helping hand to the shaping of the IP image.

External environment. The continuous advancement of technology has also prepared the ground for the successful development of library IP. With the aid of big data, IP designers can easily get clued up on the diverse needs of customers and create a string of library-specific IP images best aligned to the needs of customers, on which basis popular IP derivatives can be developed then to improve operational efficiency and to hasten the process of cashing in on IP.

2.3.2. Characteristics of library IP development

The development of library IP has the following characteristics:

Individuality. Building upon the library's own development history and geopolitical features, the visual design of library IP often conveys distinct and individual

characteristics. The differentiated personality expression and the distinctive cultural connotations enable it to represent the voices of its customers and thereby provide long-lasting vitality.

Sustainability. Despite the sensation caused at first launch, a great many domestic IP brands tend to be short-lived. To survive for a longer time, the library IP must be improved persistently and updated gradually to provide a steady stream of content and to constantly give people a sense of freshness, so that it will have lasting vitality.

3. Case Study — Suzhou Museum

Backed by the relevant national policies, non-profit cultural establishments and historic sites such as museums, libraries and art galleries are throwing themselves into the exploitation of their excellent cultural resources, with Palace Museum and Suzhou Museum standing out as stellar examples. The libraries are also in possession of a wealth of collections which are poised for exploitation as in museums. Therefore, the libraries can learn from the successful IP development cases of museums.

As a national first-class museum, Suzhou Museum is hailed as one of the stellar examples of successful museum IP operation, which is built upon its profound cultural connotations, and its characteristic cultural and creative products are all beautifully designed by drawing on Suzhou's geographic characteristics and local folk customs.

3.1. General

The IP products of Suzhou Museum are sold through two channels: online (Taobao store) and offline (shopping malls, Ziteng Bookstore). After successfully registering its trademark, Suzhou Museum has been putting in active efforts to operate cultural and creative products and to license its IP.

In addition, Suzhou Museum has partnered with other companies under IP licensing agreements to roll out 24 types of apparel themed on the elements of Suzhou Museum, thereby expanding the brand influence of "Suzhou Museum". Suzhou Museum has also launched a string of creative IP images and inked long-term licensing agreements with dozens of companies.

3.2. Characteristics of IP development

3.2.1. *Attaching equal importance to utility and culture*

The cultural and creative IP designs and product offerings of Suzhou Museum feature a distinct mix of regionality and utility. Regionality means to roll out IP images and licensed products with local cultural characteristics in exploiting the cultural elements, thereby letting the cultural relics reach out to the public in the form of cultural and creative products and enlivening the "vitality" of culture.

3.2.2. *Highlighting both artistic value and functional value*

The principle of "highlighting creativity, design and feelings" guides the IP licensing of Suzhou Museum and

leads it all the way to success. Targeting young people who love culture and arts, IP designers strive to create exquisite and elegant Jiangnan-style IP offerings underlain by the spectacular "life experience" of cultural relics and characterized by the creative expression and use of cultural stories and elements, allowing the perfect combination of artistic value and functional value amid product development.

4. Status Quo of Cultural and Creative Development in Domestic Libraries

Presently, the development of museum IP is on the right track, yet the development of library IP is still in its infancy. Drawing on the successful development experience of museum IP, libraries should tap their own potential by playing to their distinct characteristics.

4.1. Vague market positioning

What are the appealing functions and features of the cultural and creative products? What is the target consumer group of the products? Market positioning is particularly important for product development and design. The flagship store of the National Library of China has been constantly improving the functional categories of its menu bar and subdividing its user groups, yet the flagship store of the National Library Cultural and Creative Development Alliance puts in no efforts to subdivide its user groups, a possible cause of consumer loss [2].

4.2. Lack of creativity and cultural identity

Cultural and creative products are essentially the material carrier and external manifestation of cultural legacy, and the cultural connotations contained therein are the core things these products attempt to convey. Playing to its local characteristics, Suzhou Museum has embarked on the road of building its successful cultural and creative IP brand. On the contrary, the development of cultural and creative products in the library sector is still in its infancy. From practical experience to theoretical research, domestic libraries are not only eclipsed by their foreign counterparts, but also overshadowed by domestic museums. For now, domestic libraries are still dogged by problems such as vague cultural characteristics and lack of creativity and cultural identity [3].

5. Strategies for Exploiting Library Collections

5.1. Create content underlain by stories, humanistic feelings and emotions

5.1.1. *Put focus on the users*

The key steps of developing cultural and creative products are: identify user needs, identify different user groups, and extract cultural elements from user needs. With the growth of the "post-95s" and "post-00s" groups, young consumers are now spearheading the consumer market, though we should not overlook the demand of middle-aged and elderly consumers. The libraries generally house a wealth of collections, including books

and ancient texts, among which rare ancient books, rubbings, letters, genealogy books and local chronicles are all important sources of cultural and creative development. By effectively classifying the library collections, such as technological style, Chinese style, cute style, simple style, etc., they will intrigue different user groups.

5.1.2. *Tell appealing stories*

Behind every cultural and creative product stands the spiritual power of culture, and these products are nourished by the fertile soil of culture. We need to explore and figure out what kind of cultural elements we need to dig out, what kind of core connotations we need to highlight, and what kind of values we need to spread. Only by determining the stories to be told by the products can we give the products their true meaning and real vitality. The main reason why *The Little Prince* can turn from a masterpiece into an influential IP and break the age limits lies in its core connotation of "love". "Love" is one of the most universal elements in human society, and the values it conveys will endure long. Therefore, "love" is highlighted by a great many brands. The values conveyed in *The Little Prince* transcend the boundaries of time and space, showing long-term vitality. The ancient rare books, genealogy books, local chronicles and celebrity manuscripts collected in the libraries often carry the thoughts, emotions and spiritual pursuits of the ancients, and contain spiritual elements such as patriotism, affection and justice. Only by understanding Chinese culture, making good use of Chinese elements and telling appealing Chinese stories can we endow the cultural and creative products with Chinese cultural symbols and real connotations. Efforts must be made to dig deep into the spiritual power of culture, to extract cultural elements, to properly handle the internal connections between cultures, to tell appealing stories and to convey the spiritual elements in the stories to different groups of people, thereby creating content underlain by stories, humanistic feelings and emotions.

5.1.3. *Personification of brand image*

Having been passed down throughout the long history, these collections exude unique splendor, yet there has been a big historical divide between them and modern people, especially young people. Emotion is the key to connecting users and cultural and creative IP, and we need to harness the feelings contained in the cultural and creative IP to narrow the divide and to awaken users' emotional identification and true love. By adding various stylish elements, such as making amusing emojis of majestic emperors, the Palace Museum has given itself a "cute" expression, and the personification of brand image has greatly intrigued a lot of young people. This can be drawn on amid the development of library IP. By giving a vivid personified image to the brand, diverse resources can be developed on the basis of this image and transformed into content best aligned to the lifestyle and emotional identity of young people.

5.2. Cross-industry partnership

The libraries themselves have a wealthy of resources, which provide the most basic original works for film and television adaptation. In order to build successful IP brands, the libraries must keenly leverage the upsurge in the adaptation of online novels into films and TV dramas to establish partnerships with leading conglomerates from the film and TV industry and the new media industry to jointly explore the IP value of book collections. It's easier for cultural and creative products derived from films and TV dramas to gain emotional recognition. Therefore, to develop popular cultural and creative products, it's necessary for product designers to focus on representative elements such as characters, core connotations and core values of films and television dramas and to incorporate new elements that are popular and creative at the moment. For example, the National Library of China is discussing with a Zhejiang-based animation company the possibility of animating the characters in the *Awards Celebrate Peace and Prosperity*, an ancient book of opera characters, and presenting it to users in a brand new form [4]. By partnering with animation and game companies, we can visualize the characters in the books, which would be more conducive to the external image shaping and promotion of cultural and creative products.

5.3. Promotion model

5.3.1. *Marketing*

The business model combining online store with offline store: We can utilize WeChat, Weibo, Weidian, Douyin and other new media to set up online promotion and sales channels, with Weibo serving as the main channel for image promotion, WeChat as the main channel for content promotion and Douyin as the main channel for video promotion. We can use WeChat Mini Program and Weidian e-commerce platforms to sell cultural and creative products online. We can launch offline franchise stores to provide consumers with physical shopping experience.

5.3.2. *Concretized ambience experience*

Adapting to the ever-changing trends of the times, libraries should utilize new technologies to create digital libraries allowing users to access libraries online through the Internet, thereby breaking through the limitations of traditional libraries. The concretized ambience experience requires the digital library to provide complete functional partitions and a good visual experience. Visually, the UI design of the digital library should be friendly and the functional design should be comprehensive enough to meet the needs of most users, with different functional modules capable of leading users with diverse needs to their desired scenes. Marking a successful form of ambience experience [5], *A Good Book* brings the audience into different scenes in the book, giving the audience a sense of immersion and participation. With physical buildings, offline libraries can organize themed exhibitions by setting up an independent display area for a specific work to display books, related films, images, and cultural and creative products, or set aside a small area for displaying related products, or hold themed

reading sessions, reading sharing sessions, reading day events or other activities to fortify the ambience experience.

6. Conclusions

Culture has, with the lapse of time, evolved into a pivotal factor shoring up the comprehensive strength of a country and the important foothold for a nation to outshine its counterparts in the world. In the era of knowledge economy, we must tap into the connotations behind culture and use cultural and creative products as the carrier to convey the spiritual narratives of culture. The Palace Museum and Suzhou Museum are both stellar examples of spearheading new changes to cultural development in the new era. Whilst libraries house a wealth of collections, its ultimate goal is to bring these collections to life.

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