

# Research on the Application of IP Visual Presentation Design in Museum Taking the Palace Museum as an Example

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## ABSTRACT

In today's cultural context, cultural IP, as a new concept derived from IP economy, promotes the transformation and innovation of various industries in the cultural market, and creates many complete industrial chains with cultural connotations. Museums, as physical places for collecting, displaying and researching natural and human cultural heritage, are also one of the media for information dissemination. With the advent of the Internet plus era, museums pay more attention to promoting cultural heritage in the new media era and increasing social attention. Among them, the application and promotion of cultural IP has affected the dissemination and development of museum culture, and created unique creative products, thus realizing the win-win situation of museum cultural dissemination and economic benefits. This paper will take the cultural IP creative design of the Palace Museum as an example and analyse the source and application of visual design elements in Museum IP, as well as the strategy and reflection of Museum IP cultural communication in the new era.

**Keywords:** IP of museum culture, IP visual elements, Cultural communication.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the rapid development of economy makes the cultural industry full of vitality, thus promoting people's inheritance and education of Chinese culture; museums play an important role as "encyclopedia of human knowledge" and "library of objects". IP development has become an effective way to create world-class cultural symbols and enhance the soft power of national culture, as well as an important factor in the development of cultural industry. The combination of museum culture and cultural IP broadens the path and channels of museum cultural dissemination, which not only shortens the distance between the communication subject and the audience, but also triggers modern people's spiritual touch and emotional resonance. In the modern new media era, it has opened up a road of wisdom museum.

## 2. CONCEPT AND DEVELOPMENT OF MUSEUM IP CULTURE

In recent years, IP has become a popular concept of cultural industry, the so-called "IP" can

be defined as intellectual property rights, so all media products with intellectual property rights such as graphics, brands, TV series, movies and so on can be regarded as the cultural category of IP. When the cultural IP refines the cultural symbols widely recognized and loved by the public, and can innovate the industrial form and realize pan-industrialization, the cultural IP can be regarded as a super cultural symbol.

As a cultural place, museums are the natural IP of cultural resources. It mainly refers to the multi-dimensional derivative products developed around the museum's identifiable cultural relics collection in today's Internet era. The expression form of cultural IP can be the text story of cultural relics history in museums, or the anthropomorphic treatment of representative characters, or a TV program of museum cultural history, etc., which can be regarded as the cultural IP resources of museums. On the one hand, the core of cultural IP is actually a kind of cultural value, on the other hand, the content and visual elements of these IP conform to the aesthetic standards of modern people and the diversification of cultural

communication. Generally speaking, IP is an output form with high identification, vivid personality and attitude and values as the core, and it is "a cultural industry product for multi-dimensional development".

### **3. SOURCE OF MUSEUM IP VISUAL DESIGN**

#### ***3.1 Museum's Own Elements***

Symbols exist in all aspects of our lives, many scholars regard symbols as the material existence of image expression of ideas and concepts, and museum architecture itself is the visual symbol of the city. The architectural style, elements and volume of each museum have their own uniqueness, reflecting the cultural background and internal spirit of the city. For example, when creating cultural IP, Suzhou Museum consciously emphasizes its own characteristics to create unique visual symbols. It combines the conventional product packaging with the architectural form of Suzhou Museum; In Tang Yin's paintings, mountains, people, flowers, birds and trees are extracted as elements, and combined with the architectural shape of Suzhou Museum, which perfectly integrates literati culture and architectural culture. Each tea box has the cultural characteristics of Suzhou museum ("Figure 1"), so that users can clearly understand the cultural information to be transmitted by the museum, and create their own unique visual symbols, which are very brand conceptual. While emphasizing the cultural nature, it also enables the museum to open up the innovative path of Museum culture through an interesting way.



Figure 1 Suzhou Museum cultural and creative products (Source: Public Account).

#### ***3.2 Elements of Exhibits and Cultural Relics***

Every museum has a treasure that can represent the museum, and each cultural relic exhibit has its

own historical story and cultural background. Nowadays, many museums combine the shape, color, material and cultural details of their cultural relics exhibits to refine the visual design elements, so that cultural relics can be presented to the public in the form of creative products, which enlarges the distance between museums and the public, and makes museums penetrate into the lives of the public. Among them, the Shanghai Museum, on the 90th anniversary of Disney Mickey in 2018, adopted the way of cultural IP authorization to carry out a cross-border cooperation between museum cultural relics and Mickey's image in Disney, and in the case that most of the museum's creative products are only simple copies of cultural relics. Combining the image of Mickey with the mechanism pattern of the precious bronze tripod of Shanghai Museum, more consideration is given to the practicality and aesthetics of the product, and the details of the bronze tripod are integrated into the product. For example, canvas bags, necklaces and jewelry combine the heavy and steady history with the interesting modern times, resulting in a wonderful chemical reaction. It can be seen that the Shanghai Museum uses cultural IP to unearth the stories behind the cultural relics, and uses cultural elements to construct and recreate cultural products using different carriers, which enhances the museum's cultural appeal and social dissemination, thereby achieving the inheritance and promotion of excellent traditional culture purpose ("Figure 2", "Figure 3").



Figure 2 "Odd" fun cultural creation of natural history (Source: official website).



"Odd" interesting cultural and creative products of the museum (Source: official website).

### 3.3 Regional Cultural Element

The formation of regional culture is the historical precipitation accumulated by a region or a country over the years. Nowadays, many museums integrate the local regional cultural characteristics into the museum exhibition space, visual communication and other aspects, which not only inherits and promotes the regional culture, but also makes the museum have the charm of cultural characteristics. Looking at the creative industry of Chinese museums nowadays, we can find that many creative product designs are similar and lack creativity. It is difficult for non-professionals to distinguish the differences between creative products and tourist souvenirs, how to increase the recognition of creative products, on the premise of ensuring beauty and practicality, better endow culture on products, designers need to dig deeply into the understanding of cultural connotations,

combined with emotional design, traditional and modern combination, so that products can be close to consumers' lives in a cultural way.

As Dunhuang culture in China's three major regional cultures, Dunhuang Research Institute is a special existence. The purpose of the development of creative products in ordinary museums is to integrate culture into public life, while the development of creative products in Dunhuang Research Institute is to "permanently preserve and utilize Dunhuang culture as a world cultural treasure". In the creative products of Dunhuang Research Institute, the scriptures, religions and murals in regional culture are mostly used as design elements. Among them, the digital creative activity "Dunhuang Poetry Towel" launched by Dunhuang Research Institute and Tencent is to continue the concept of Dunhuang algae well to the scarf, and to create the scarf pattern through the superposition

and change of the pattern. Users can extract colors from Dunhuang murals according to their preferences to match the colors of scarves, design good patterns and make them into physical objects,

this form of online interactive creative products, so that people thousands of years later feel the regional cultural characteristics of Dunhuang and the thickness of culture ("Figure 4").



Figure 3 "Dunhuang Poetry Scarf" cultural and creative design (Source: Public Account).

#### 4. IP DESIGN AND APPLICATION PROMOTION OF THE PALACE MUSEUM

The Palace Museum as a record of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the fresh history of the palace archives, the precious cultural heritage of all mankind. With 1,863,404 pieces of collections, it is not only a huge treasure house of the Ming and Qing royal treasures, but also a huge IP treasure and IP complex, with a large number of derivative IP, in each historical figure and cultural relics, can extend the exhibition of numerous moving stories and huge commercial value. In the early Palace Museum literary creation, due to the conceptual deviation of cultural and creative products, the Palace Museum's literary and creative products are only simple copies of collections, and because of the high price, few consumers buy them. Until 2013, the Taipei Palace Museum produced a "I know" creative paper tape, which quickly became popular on the Internet, so that the Palace Museum saw a huge market for the development of cultural and creative products. Nowadays, the application and promotion of the diversified innovation strategy of the Palace Museum culture IP makes the traditional history and culture more life-oriented in the new era trend, and meets the aesthetic and needs of consumers.

##### 4.1 Creative Product Development

Creative products make traditional culture "live up". Creative products, also known as cultural and creative products, are high value-added products that rely on particularity and innovation to transform and upgrade cultural resources and historical relics by means of modern communication means. Among them, the Palace Museum Cultural Creation is a derivative of the Palace Museum Cultural IP, a cultural product of the combination of historical elements and modern design, which breaks through the traditional mode of literary creation and makes the Palace Museum Culture present in front of the public with a concrete carrier. At the same time, it has irreplaceable cultural particularity and originality, perfectly combines classical beauty with modern art, and has both interesting, historic and artistic qualities, thus creating the brand cultural symbol of the Palace Museum's literary creation IP, which is deeply loved by the public. And the creation of the Palace Museum has made the nearly 600-year-old Palace Museum subvert the stereotypes of the public. For example, the fan with the funny emperor, the cute cat doll, and the limited edition of the Forbidden City lipstick are popular among the public. From 2013 to 2016, the sales of the Palace Museum Wenchuang increased to nearly 1 billion yuan. In 2017, the president of the Palace Museum, Shan Jixiang, revealed that the sales of literary creation reached 1.5 billion yuan, which shows that in the process of searching for

innovative tradition and modernity, the Palace Museum has become an enduring national cultural IP.

As an independent intellectual property right, the Palace Museum integrates the distinctive characteristics of the times on the basis of traditional handicraft, in which the design inspiration of "contrast sprouting" bridges the gap between museums and the people. For example, "I also miss you very much" folding fan ("Figure 5"), "imperial guard" mobile phone holder, "fair and bright" charger and so on, will be historic, intellectual and artistic, interesting skillfully combined, attracting a large number of young consumer groups. It not only made the 100-year-old Palace Museum alive, but also made the "Forbidden City Life Aesthetics" enter the public life.



Figure 4 Cultural and creative design of the Palace Museum (Source: Cultural and Creative of the Palace Museum).

#### 4.2 Cross-media Creation

With the advent of the new media era, the mode of Museum communication is no longer confined to the single mode of offline entity visit, but breaks the barriers between media and the boundaries between disseminators and receivers by means of Internet technology, which highlights the vitality of Museum culture in the new era. Under the operation of cultural IP, the Palace Museum not only has the output of creative products, but also has cross-media integrated marketing. For example, in 2016, the Palace Museum produced a documentary "I Repaired Cultural Relics in the Palace Museum", which recorded the work of cultural relics restoration and the master of cultural relics restoration, and the platform broadcast more than 1 million times, this kind of cross-media

creation of cultural relics and variety arts broke through the limitations of time and space, and realized the transmission mode of digital online and offline combination. In the documentary, the audience can see the restoration process of cultural relics that cannot be seen in the museum, which increases the audience's understanding and interest in the content of cultural relics.

In addition, the Palace Museum's "New Palace Museum" also pushed the creation of creative products carrying the story of the Palace Museum to a new height through variety deduction ("Figure 6"). Through the vivid and intuitive way of variety arts, the audience was brought into the Palace Museum to understand the literary creation, which subverted the stereotype of the Palace Museum in the past. Its ratings have also been high, creating a "Palace Museum literary creation fever", in the third season not only continue to "unlock" the cold knowledge of the 600-year-old Forbidden City, but also the creative design PK of college students, attracting many viewers' attention. Under the combination of culture and entertainment, we can experience the wisdom of the ancients and the persistence of the Palace Museum people in inheriting Chinese culture. The Palace Museum also uses cross-media communication to create topics, effectively integrate pictures, videos, live broadcasting and other resources, and promote them on the official website of the Palace Museum, micro-blog, micro-letter, and other new media platforms. This cross-media way connects ancient and modern, and shows the excellent traditional culture of China to the public in a way that conforms to the characteristics of contemporary communication.



Figure 5 Poster of "Renewing the Forbidden City" (Source: official website).

### 4.3 Thematic Exhibition Application

The most direct way to transform IP in museums is to use IP culture in the theme of exhibitions and the narration of stories. Just like today's hot museum flash exhibition is to use cultural IP to bring culture into public life, breaking the solemn image of the museum and the public's dull impression of traditional culture. For example, Shanghai Shimao Square, as the trend center of Shanghai, combined with the IP of the traditional culture of the Palace Museum, has carried out in-depth cross-border joint marketing to introduce the first cultural flash store of the Palace Museum in Shanghai, and launched the "Spring Festival" activity of "Spring Festival"; Another example is the Spring Festival Exhibition held by the Palace Museum in 2019, "Welcoming the New Year-Celebrating the New Year in the Forbidden City", which immerses the public to experience the

elements contained in the history and cultural relics of the Palace Museum, and to feel the strong flavor of the New Year in the Palace Museum ("Figure 7"); As well as the theme exhibition of "Ocean World in the Palace Museum" exhibited in Yuyuan Garden, Shanghai, with the theme of "Sea Mistake Map" of the Palace Museum, more than 30 works are displayed in the exhibition hall of 1000 square meters, so that viewers can see the magical ancient ocean world across the boundaries of space and time. These exhibitions use the IP culture and new technology of the Palace Museum to effectively combine cultural knowledge with commercial marketing. Breaking the limitation of time and space, the theme exhibition of the Palace Museum has become a sales and communication terminal integrating culture, consumption and exhibition.



Figure 6 Shanghai World Trade Center \* Forbidden City Museum pop-up exhibition (Source: Baidu Pictures).

## 5. REFLECTION ON MUSEUM IP CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE NEW MEDIA AGE

Under the influence of new media, the dissemination of visual culture in museums shows the orientation of diversification of communication modes, expansion of audience area and conformity to mass consumption. Among them, the development of Museum IP culture has created national cultural symbols and aroused people's respect for traditional cultural values. Just as the Palace Museum's creative products have changed

the traditional way of communication by combining the trend culture of the new era with the tendency of mass consumption, they use the way of developing creative works carrying the value of museums, building online cultural and Museum IP authorization to disseminate traditional culture, so that the cultural heritage of the Palace Museum can "live up" and truly integrate culture into people's lives.

In the process of developing cultural IP, museums should avoid being too commercialized and lose their cultural characteristics. Therefore, when transforming traditional culture into cultural

and creative products, it is necessary not only to study the life needs of the contemporary public, explore the connection points between museum cultural information and current social life, and use culture to influence life, but also to keep up with the changes of the times and use new technology to extend museum cultural communication ability. This will contribute to creating not only an era of design-driven consumption upgrading, but also a design style with Chinese cultural symbols.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The application of the Palace Museum's cultural IP in the museum's cultural creation and exhibitions not only meets the consumer needs of the masses, but also promotes the diversification of its cultural communication methods. In the new era, museums should vigorously explore collection resources and promote the research and development of museums' creative products. When extracting visual elements, they should combine creative design with the unique cultural resources in the museum to promote the extension of museum culture.

## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

This paper is independently completed by Yiwen Wang.

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