

Successful Factors of Zhejiang Satellite TV Program "The Dance of China"

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Abstract—Since ZJTV launched the program “The Dance of China”, it has received much attention and echoes from both inside and outside the industry because of its constantly increased audience rating and favorable public praises. This article explores and analyzes the successful factors from several aspects such as its characteristic, pattern, mentor team, programming, marketing, etc.

Keywords—*The Dance of China; succesful factors; pattern; programming*

I. INTRODUCTION

TV talent show, as an important part in TV variety columns, has been always favored by people. The noontide of Chinese TV talent show appeared following “Super Girl” launched by Hunan Satellite TV in the summer of 2008. In that year, Super Girl attracted much attention of hundred millions of Chinese audiences, following which, talent show programs began to spring up like mushrooms after rain in various satellite TV, however, this fever gradually fade away since audiences has been tired of the similar programs of each TV station. This aesthetic fatigue of audiences has proved that their favor and tastes towards TV programs are increasingly improving. In addition, the issue of cutback on TV entertainment by nation once more pulled talent show programs into its ice period.

It is widely believed that talent shows have been experiencing the low ebb time, but “The Voice of China” rapidly heats up again. Following the hot tide of “The Voice of China”, cooperating with Zhejiang Satellite TV, Shimmering Stars Made mega-expensively creates the new program “The Dance of China” which premiered on Apr. 19. Suddenly, a storm swept Chinese TV screens, raising a wave of “The Dance of China” fever in nationwide. “The Dance of China” suddenly became a hot topic arousing many discussions by people of inside and outside industry, and motivating constantly much-touted and reflected by different industries, pouring an innovative energy into China’s TV dance programs. It has force of models which are worth of closely questioning and exploring by other counterparts. The success of “The Dance of China” never happens by accident, and then what exactly creates the successful program?

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF “THE DANCE OF CHINA”

“The Dance of China”, the second Chinese version of “American Dance Idol”, is a big-scale motivational professional commentary program of dance jointly programmed by Zhejiang Satellite TV and Shimmering Stars Made. The program invites Aaron Kwok, Hai Qing, Jin Xing as special mentors, Fang Jun as the manager, and Huang Doudou as the special critic. “The Dance of China” aims to find the most popular dancer in China, and displays the physical beauty of Chinese people to the world. By guiding audiences to attach attention to dance arts, develop and carry forward China’s dance culture. Encouragement, as its symbol and uniqueness, realness, and equality also are the major characteristics of the program.

A. Innovation

Till now, China’s dance talent shows have experienced 14 years tracing back the origin “CCTV Dance Competition” held by CCTV in 2000 which created a pioneer for the programs of China’s TV dance talent show, whereafter, similar programs appeared such as “Dance World of CCTV”, “The Hottest Ethnic Trend”/ “The Most Dazzling Ethnic Wind” of JSTV, “The Voice of Dance” of ZJTV, “Chinese Dance Idol” of Dragon TV, “Amazing Dance” of HNTV, and “Step Up” of CCTV, and now “The Dance of China” gradually emerged its strong competitiveness. Through the whole journey, the programs of China’s TV talent show have been mired in the dilemma of “select” or “show”, and grew up in the battle between profession and entertainment.

- Dance talent show 2.0 -- dancing for show. “CCTV Dance Competition” is on the purpose of flourishing the creation of dance, bringing out new men and new works and enriching the television screens”. By which it is not difficult to notice that it first belongs to the professional competition and then it is a television program, and the play is for the service of competition. It brings more the results of “select”, which highlights the authorities and professions of selection, while television media only presents its truthful and complete process, without extra “show” poured into it. This type of television programs which is “born for selection” obeys the concept of “show serves selection” is temperately called as “show for selection”. Television

programs based on the concept “show for selection” also include various character selections, award ceremony, and television competitions, etc., all of which constitute the theme of television talent show 2.0.

- The Most Dazzling Ethnic Wind of JSTV, The Voice of Dance of ZJTV, and Amazing Dance of HNTV, etc. have become the main force of dance talent show 2.0. During this period, the selling points of programs are not only limited to the presentation of competitors, the background of competitors, the sentiment of holders and comments of professional judges on scene have poured into more attractions and visual enjoyment for programs. Talent shows turn from television programs to universal commercial performance which does not aim to “selection” but to audience rating eventually, so that “selection” is just a platform provided for the incisive and vivid “show” at that time. However, some of the television programs are mired into the vulgarization due to “Selection for show”. Since the entertainment function of talent show programs have been enlarged infinitely, accordingly the information delivery and educational function will increasingly be weakened, which may even result of dislocation of value.
- The transmission of “Chinese Dance Idol” of Dragon TV in 2013 and “The Dance of China” of ZJTV in 2014 have become a hot topic discussed by people inside and outside the industry, which poured a warm current into China’s dance talent show programs. The design of their program pattern has corrected the partiality and defects of former programs. These programs return to its purpose of dance show on the pursuit of specialty during selecting, with the core concept of “what is excellent dance?” and the value behind dance instead of “wonderful dance”, and naturally express the concealed feelings and stories during the process of selecting and identifying excellent dance, so as to transfer the right energy from dream and inspiration to the public. The high unity of “select” and “show” brings out on the best in each other, which is a qualitative leap that leading China’s TV dance talent show programs to step into time 3.0 and which also is the innovation of “The Dance of China”.

B. Encouragement

Most of traditional talent shows are too high to reach, and the tense atmosphere, ornate sites, senior judges and high-profile program elements have displayed a high-end, serious, hard and tense speech signal. On the contrary, the comment way of “The Dance of China” is highly humanized without too much jargon and poisonous words, which creates a relaxed and casual atmosphere of scene. Students here can get the most sincere advice and guidance, because teachers never blame and abuse them. No matter success or failure of the selectors, teachers always give the most sincere encouragement and guidance.

C. Reality

Some western media divide the television programs into three major types: News, teleplay and non-fiction entertainment programs. From their points of view, the entertainment programs are not for artistic appreciation and should be based on the real life situations. Therefore, “reality is the purest entertainment” becomes the creed of the industry. We have witnessed that, in the stage of “The Dance of China”, the purest expression and performance of the real look of dance without gorgeous packaging and luxurious performance but only the emotional expressions of true excellent dances. Its selectors, just like you and me, are ordinary and common. Lightly making up, they dance naturally and simply, even some of them show in the stage with bare feet. Though they are not attractive in their appearances, the most splendid dance postures in them and true emotions have brought the program to the dance itself outshining all other packed and gorgeous dance programs. It is the pure, simple and chaste romanticism like a fresh wind blowing from blundering society that makes people refreshing and irresistible.

D. Equality

The stage of “The Dance of China” does not limit the ages, genders, appearances and professions of selectors, while taking dance as the only standard, that is to say, no matter who you are, a favorable man having participated in many programs, even a dancer with some renown, the only way to prove yourself is by your dance strength. Only your dance can speak for yourself and seize audiences’ attentions. As long as dancing perfectly, selectors are able to realize their dance dream in this stage, and selectors of this program are no more vulnerable group that are selected by judges, on the contrary, they have obsessed the “mentor options”. The interaction between “grass roots + stars” and reversal way disparity form the previous programs.

III. PATTERN INNOVATION OF THE DANCE OF CHINA PROGRAM

The program pattern of “The Dance of China” is brought from “So You Think You Can Dance” of America, the highest level of dance talent show program with its sole show of dance. As a popular television program, it generalizes the dance culture to audiences at home and abroad and raises many people’s dance dream. Dance styles are diversified, including street dance, modern dance, Latin dance, jazziness and tap dance, etc. “So You Think You Can Dance” is known as “American Dance Idol”, at the earliest opening its qualification trials throughout the United States in Jul. 20, 2005. In 2013, this program, converging the dreams and sentiments of Chinese dancers, was introduced to China by Dragon TV and Shimmering Star Made team and shocked this country and brought gorgeous blossom in the snake New Year. In 2014, Shimmering Star Made cooperated with ZJTV to luxuriously create the second season of “So You Think You Can Dance” with the changed name as “The Dance of China”.

A. Introduction of Copyright by Outsourcing Mode

After American FOX (FOX Studios) built American idol which ranked first in audience rating, “The Dance of China” is

derived from *So You Think You Can Dance* which is created by the same team and aims to find “the most favorable dance of America”, enjoying the highest audience rating among dance talent show programs. *Shimmering Star Made of STAR* did not hesitate to purchase the Chinese copyright of *So You Think You Can Dance* with heavy gold from FOX company, now the program mode has been spread to more than 20 countries, which is another purchasing of copyright of a reality show after “*The Voice of China*”, “*China's got talent*” and “*Dance Forest Contest*”. Outsourcing copyright import mode is a shortcut for the program. Outsourcing programs are usually abroad programs having caused strong repercussions and having accepted the inspection of media, audience and market, so as to add local Chinese elements after the introduction of program. That is a developing direction of present Chinese TV shows.

By buying foreign copyright, first of all, you can get the original “program bible”, just like a “product specification” and also accurately positions the key selling point of product, so as to make importers save time and efforts. Secondly, the iconic props device and the original program devices can also be obtained. At the same time of introducing “*So You Think You Can Dance*”, the United States copyright owners have provided the “bible” containing the descriptions of script, plot of a seat design, music, lighting, camera setting, publicity opening and poster design; they even dispatched personnel for on-site guidance and training, and participating in the production, implementation, marketing, etc. of the program.

B. The operational mode of separating programming and playing

Separating programming and playing refers to management system where during programming, circulating and playing process of television program, programming and playing of program should be taken responsibility by different units. “*The Dance of China*” is respectively programmed and played by different institutions with ZJTV as the broadcast side and Shanghai *Shimmering Star Made* once creating a “*Dance Forest Congress*”, “*China's Got Talent*”, “*The Voice of China*” as the creator. The company has bought Chinese copyright of American *So You Think You Can Dance* with a high price. The broadcast right of “*The Dance of China*” has not been bought for once by ZJTV from *Shimmering Star Made*, but to take the “investment” as business model. ZJTV and *Shimmering Star Made* both enjoy “copyright ownership, joint investment, joint production, risk sharing and benefit sharing”. The agreement stipulates that they together have reached an red line agreement about the reception of TV program, if the reception of TV program is below this line, that is to say, the program once fails, all losses should be borne by *Shimmering Star Made*; if above this line, then their dividends, more successful the program is, higher the benefits is, and both sides come into more. Proved by the true operation of “*The voice of China*”, this agreement is very successful, so it will be followed to create “*The Dance of China*”.

As a motivational dance show, “*The Dance of China*” accurately grasps its own core competitiveness, in the present period that “talent show” tired let the audience find everything new and fresh in front of the TV. And its success provides

valuable experience to the present program production, especially entertainment programs.

IV. POWERFUL MENTOR TEAM OF “THE DANCE OF CHINA” PROGRAM

A. Art Director Fang Jun

Fang Jun, an international standard dancer and the art director of “*The Dance of China*”, has held the post of six consecutive terms as a judge in “*Dance Battle*” of Dragon TV, and is called “manager of dance forest”. In 2006, he established Fang Jun Literary and Artistic Creation Center and Fang Jun’s Dance School of *Dance Battle*. He was awarded of the prize “*China TV Dance Award*” in the global Chinese music awards ceremony, and known as “the first person of *China TV Dance*”.

B. Mentor Aaron Kwok

Aaron Kwok, an artist in Chinese entertainment circle of song, dance and film, is generally known as “Asia's dance king”. In 1994, he issued Aaron Kwok’s wild temptation concert with 16 dances in it and which is the only Chinese album bought by Michael Jackson. In 1996, he was awarded the Professional Dance Awards “*The Year Award of Hongkong Dance*” and became the first entertainment artist to receive this honor. In 2008, 450 degree revolving stage of Aaron Kwok’s *Dance Forest Gump* was recorded as the world's largest revolving stage and created a Guinness world records. A famous calligrapher of Fudan University, professor Zhang Zhengang gifted the calligraphy of “*Dance Stage King*”. He not only appears as a mentor, but the current image ambassador of “*The Dance of China*”.

C. Mentor Jin Xing

Jin Xing, a famous dancer, is generally called as “The pioneer of Chinese modern dance” and now holds the position of head and art director of “*Shanghai Jin Xing’s Modern Dance Group*”. The representatives include *Semi Dream*, *Sea wind*, *Red and black*, *Tango at Sea* and *So Far*, *So Close*, etc. Mentor Jin Xing has always become famous with “poisonous tongue” in various shows. When facing dance, she adheres to speak the truth and always maintain a strict insight which enables that every detail of works can be accurately grasped. In the competition, when dancers confront with the super intelligent mentor, only dance itself is the key factor to determine whether or not dancers are excellent.

D. Mentor Hai Qing

Hai Qing, a Chinese actress, is known as the “national wife”. The representatives of her include *Double Faced Adhesive Tape*, *Wang Gui* and *Anna*, *Dwelling Narrowness*, *A Beautiful Daughter-in-law Era* and so on. Hai Qing is familiar with the audience from the beginning of the drama, so it was really surprising that she appeared in “*The Dance of China*” as a mentor. In fact she learned dance in her 12 years old in Jiangsu drama school, graduated at the age of 17 and worked in Jiangsu Province Song and Dance Theatre. Although she entered the industry of actors, Hai Qing's passion for dance has never stopped. Years of professional dance skills and heart of

the dance of love and respect, let Hai Qing have a very high standard of dance and dancer. The mentor, with graceful, charming smile leading to many players' fear, is praised as "the most beautiful mentor".

E. Commentator Huang Doudou of Program

Huang Doudou, a country-level actor, has enjoyed the special government allowance of the State Council, and now holds the post of art director of Shanghai song and dance troupe, and vice-chairman of China Dancers Association. His masterpieces include Drunken Drum, Terracotta Warrior Soul, Su Wu, Sparking Red Star, etc. In addition, he was considered as "the most masculine dancer of China" and a Chinese dancer who dances by Chinese style in the international stage.

Judges are the primary productive of a talent show. The appearance of the five judges that Fang Jun, Aaron Kwok, Jin Xing, Hai Qing and Huang Doudou has provided the successful foundation for "The Dance of China" at first. They vary in style, cooperate with one another and have tacit understanding and attitude of sincere and modest, also don't play "big" and are friendly and humorous. The performance of each judge is in line with their location positioned by audience, and the program has been in the delivery of a correct value view, which can encourage players to have the courage to stick to their dreams and make "The Dance of China" become a warm inspirational program in some degree.

V. PERFECT IN WORKMANSHIP OF "THE DANCE OF CHINA" PROGRAM

It depends on a lot of factors for creating a successful program, and the backstage programming is a key part that should not be neglected. The programming team of "The Dance of China" is Shimmering Stars Made which has successfully experienced a series of baptisms by So You Think You Can Dance, China's Got Talent and The Voice of China since its born in Shanghai TV industry. During the programming of these programs, Shimmering Stars Made team has got sufficient training and suffering and eventually became an excellent made team. During its growth process, this team not only has not only learned the specialization of work and post authority consciousness in the western pattern, but also motivated the native consciousness and Chinese feelings. In addition, this team owns rich experiences and innovative awareness, so that they poured the appropriate Chinese elements into the program on the basis of So You Think You Can Dance. In order to meet the demands of Chinese audiences, they adds amount of emotional elements to the program, there are special story directors of "The Dance of China", who fully are acquainted with the selectors' vocations, family and emotion situations by long-term and interrupted communications with selectors. Then, under the premise of not making up and twisting truths, the story directors would make refined and elaborate design and select the most attractive and touching parts of their experiences which are able to expressed naturally in the program. Thus, the audiences can see hope from the program, so as to spread the positive energy and let hope prevail in our society.

VI. SUCCESSFUL MARKETING STRATEGY OF "THE DANCE OF CHINA"

The failure or success of media operation depends on not only the contents, but the capacities to integrate resources and concrete forms of industrial interaction. Speaking of "The Dance of China" in 2014, its success is not only embodied the contents but in the marketing. The concept that "Content is king" cannot exist independently without markets.

A. Micro Blog Marketing

Because of stepping into "micro age", as an important marketing method, micro blog has a disregardful transmission dynamics. Since signing on The Dance of China, both specialists and common audiences are conducting comments and followings by micro blog which increasingly enlarges its prestige and influences, so that almost for a night, the dancing postures of selectors have occupied every corner of cyberspace. Obviously, the micro blog has significant contributions for this.

B. Advertisement Marketing

With the fever spreading of "The Dance of China", the sponsor of this program Wetcode also becomes the biggest winner. With the third issuance of "The Dance of China", its fresh and hot contents once more motivate the attentions towards the program itself and Wetcode brand to the peak. In addition, it is shown that according to data, the overall searching index in Baidu of "The Dance of China" is 52,849; among them its mobile searching index is 18,120, which means that the program greatly flourishes the attentions of Wetcode brand. After finishing the third episode, the overall searching index in Baidu has risen by 93.9% and the mobile searching index rises by 84.2%. So high-attention brand and program has created an enormous audience rating, in the night of third episode for Wetcode. The Dance of China, the CSM48 urban audience rating has reached 1.13% with its audience ratings and popularity ranking first among the similar talent show programs. Therefore, it is difficult for the advertisement accepted by the audiences under the circumstances of high audience rating fever and flourished advertisements.

VII. CONCLUSION

There must be some rules to follow of a favorable and popular program, which must create and promote considerable products conforming to the times characteristics and meeting the needs of audiences. "The Dance of China" never succeeds by accident, and that is its bright features and special advantages on the program characteristic, program pattern, mentor team, program production and promotion which create a successful The Dance of China. Meanwhile, the successfulness of "The Dance of China" has provided valuable experiences for the production of Chinese entertainment programs, especially dance talent show programs.

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