

# Exploring the Marketing Path of Creative Products from the New Media Perspective: Take Dunhuang Cultural Products as an Example

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**Abstract.** Since the 21st century, cultural and creative industries have emerged, and the proportion of cultural and creative products in cultural consumption has gradually increased, becoming a new generation of consumption hotspots. This paper takes China's Dunhuang cultural and creative products as the research object, summarizes their marketing status through the 3C marketing theory, analyzes the marketing advantages and difficulties of Dunhuang cultural and creative products combined with the 4P approach, and then proposes the countermeasures for the marketing problems. Finally, it looks forward to the development road of modern cultural and creative products and gives marketing countermeasures. It is expected to provide marketing countermeasures that can be applied to other cultural and creative products in China and help them reach the international stage better. It also offers valuable reference suggestions for developing the modern cultural and creative industry and creating current cultural and creative products.

**Keywords:** Dunhuang creative products; Cultural industries; 4P theory; Consumption of culture.

## 1. Introduction

The development of the cultural and creative industries has matured in recent years. With the rise of the cultural and creative industries in the Forbidden City, the cultural and creative industries in many places have also started to actively explore the road of marketing cultural and innovative products. One of the more influential cultural brands is Dunhuang Cultural Creations.

In terms of marketing channels for cultural and creative products, taking the two cultural and innovative programs "Creative China" and "The New Palace" as examples, there are specific experiences and models for the integration of traditional culture and creative products to achieve mutual empowerment of cultural and industrial values [1]. In terms of the application of technology in cultural and innovative products, the "Dunhuang" set of cards is an example. Officials at Dunhuang Mogao Caves have started to use digital technology for promotion and marketing, such as collectible collector cards and light and shadow art exhibitions, which use scanning processes and AR effects to create beautiful, unique Dunhuang products that provide a great visual experience for visitors [2]. In promoting cultural and creative products, the Palace Museum's Forbidden City Taobao-derived cultural and creative industries in Beijing have a significant advantage in new media marketing. It breaks down time and geographical restrictions, allowing consumer groups to no longer feel that the Palace is 'far away from them while better achieving a win-win situation regarding cultural dissemination and sales [3]. To break through the bottleneck and achieve more significant sales, museums must innovate on all fronts [4].

This study argues that specifying the fan effect and how the Dunhuang Flying Skateboard series effectively combines the fan effect as a marketing tool to achieve beautiful results in sales. This marketing technique also has implications for other cultural and creative products.

Based on the process tracing approach in the case study, the 3C marketing theory was applied to analyze Dunhuang's cultural and creative products in three different dimensions: the company itself (Corporation), the company's customers (Customer), and the competitors (Competitors) as a whole. By integrating the company, its customers, and its competitors and coherently considering them, a company can build its strategic advantage and capture the essence of its strategy to achieve business success. After that, based on the 4P theory, the specific case of Dunhuang is further analyzed and considered from the four dimensions of Product, Price, Promotion, and Place. Finally, this study summarizes the causes of the marketing dilemma for Dunhuang's cultural and creative products. It also responds to the marketing problem, which leads to marketing suggestions and considerations for the entire cultural and creative field. This study provides constructive tips for Chinese artists to build international cultural and innovative brands and gives more ideas for international artists to contribute to cultural cross-fertilization and development.

## **2. Case restoration: the Current State of Marketing Dunhuang's Cultural and Creative Products**

### **2.1 Dunhuang Cultural Products Company Overview**

The strong support from the government is beneficial for Dunhuang's cultural and creative products. Gansu aims to give play to its regional advantages of combining east and west, connecting north and south, and profoundly participating in constructing the "Belt and Road." The spread of Gansu culture has clear national policies and upper guidance. Gansu Provincial Museum and Dunhuang Research Academy were identified as the first batch of cultural relics units in Gansu Province as the first approved pilot unit for developing literary and creative products. Dunhuang Cultural Creation Company also reached cooperation intentions with Lintao, Tongwei, Yumen, and other counties and cities to promote the development of regional culture [5].

The culture of Dunhuang not only proves the history of the integration of ancient Chinese civilization and foreign Buddhist art but also represents the compatibility and inclusiveness of Chinese culture. At present, after re-examining the art form and cultural connotation of Dunhuang murals, Dunhuang Industrial Culture Creative Co., Ltd. has developed and designed more than 1,000 cultural and creative products with distinctive themes and Dunhuang characteristics through the design and transformation methods after adopting modern semantic, and has established the gene bank of Dunhuang cultural elements, the library of Dunhuang cultural and creative products, the library of tourist portraits, and the sales database. Dunhuang International Design Week will be organized so that the public can deeply understand the connotation of Dunhuang culture and better spread Dunhuang's culture.

### **2.2 Analysis of Potential Competitors for the Dunhuang Cultural and Creative Brand**

As we all know, the Palace Museum in Beijing has witnessed the changes of several dynasties. Its countless cultural deposits and endless connotations also create advantages for its cultural and creative products. The cultural and innovative products of the Forbidden City of Beijing have gained an excellent reputation in the cultural and creative circles in recent years, and their competitiveness has been dramatically enhanced as a strong competitor of Dunhuang cultural and creative industries, whether it is product categories or product sales.

The Palace Museum tries to determine an obvious target audience through three methods: "analyzing the needs of the audience," "entertaining mentality," and "aesthetic consciousness." In addition, by highlighting the corresponding characteristics of cultural and creative products from the four aspects of "the borrowing and transformation of representation elements," "the extraction and application of connotation and meaning," "the cute design of product image," and "the presentation of featured product series" according to the psychological needs of the audience, the relatively clear development direction and development concept of physical cultural and creative products and virtual

cultural and creative products are determined. The cultural and innovative product development concept of Beijing Palace also got prominent.

Based on public demand, cutting-edge technology, and process, it has constantly innovated in cultural and creative products. In operation, the Palace Museum has created a multi-channel operation matrix. Through network language, star cooperation, open collection of product ideas, and other means, the cultural and creative products of Beijing Palace Museum have achieved viral spread, expanded the dissemination range of the cultural and clever products of Beijing Palace Museum, increased the dissemination of the cultural and innovative products of Beijing Palace Museum, so that their competitiveness cannot be underestimated.

### **2.3 Analysis of Consumer Groups of Dunhuang Cultural and Creative Products**

The research blueprint and observation data report reveal that in the post-90s and post-00s, the percentage of people buying cultural and creative products from museums reach 50.4%, the leading group of cultural and creative products consumers. Regarding gender distribution, women account for 79.2%, and men account for 20.8%. Therefore, the purchasing power of women on cultural and creative products far exceeds that of men. From the perspective of urban distribution, the leading consumer group of cultural and innovative products is the second tier and above, accounting for 74% of the total. For these young consumers, content-based marketing has become the top priority.

In addition, according to the White Paper on the Development of China's Toy and Baby Products Industry in 2022, 27.7% of the audience for brands and IP are young people (aged 18-25), followed by young and middle-aged people (aged 26-40) who account for 23% and young people (aged 11-17) who account for 20.9%. The proportion of young and middle-aged people (aged 26 to 40) increased by 4.9 % compared to last year. Cultural and creative consumption is mainly concentrated between 18 and 40 years old.

Dunhuang Museum has targeted the customers of young people who love traditional culture in the new era. By understanding and discovering the specific consumption demands of modern young people for cultural and creative products, Dunhuang Museum concluded that young people pay more attention to the cultural connotation, innovative design, and practicability of products. Therefore, cultural and creative products integrated with traditional culture, sophisticated manufacturing techniques, and strong practicability are more attractive to modern young people.

As a representative of the inheritance of Dunhuang traditional culture, the Dunhuang Museum skillfully uses cultural and creative products, integrates and refines key elements from Dunhuang murals, and innovatively and boldly combines Dunhuang brand symbols and visual identity system, thus bringing new vitality to the traditional culture of Dunhuang.

## **3. Case Study: Marketing Advantages, Limits, and Countermeasures for Dunhuang's Cultural and Creative Products**

This study analyses Dunhuang's cultural and creative products based on the 4Ps theory, analyzing the advantages of Dunhuang's cultural and creative developments in terms of product and place. The problems of Dunhuang's cultural and innovative products are analyzed in terms of price and promotion. The bookmark series is also used as a case study to investigate the causes of the difficulties and provide solutions.

### **3.1 Marketing Advantages of Dunhuang Cultural and Creative Products**

#### **3.1.1 Product**

The Dunhuang Museum has introduced the elements of Dunhuang, such as the nine-colored deer and the flying apsaras, into the products, such as silk scarves, water cups, and bookmarks, which are exquisite and colorful, and cleverly narrates the distance between People's Daily life and Dunhuang culture. In the cultural and creative products with a sense of science and technology, and design, the

endless charm of Dunhuang culture is blooming, and the power of traditional Chinese civilization is transmitted [6].

As shown in Figure 1, taking the Dunhuang Cultural Creation bookmark as an example, it is of high quality and exquisite production. It integrates frescoes and products in the art of Dunhuang Grottoes that can promote Buddhist principles to Buddhists and the public through pictures, construct an ideal Buddhist world, and infect the grottoes' visitors with meaning, thus making the cultural and emotional experience better.



**Fig. 1** Sample image of a bookmark taken from Le Dance Dunhuang  
(From the Dunhuang Museum flagship shop on Taobao App)

### 3.1.2 Place

Dunhuang Museum effectively grasped the way of online new media marketing in the particular period, carried out online live marketing on various social platforms, and carried out cooperation and cross-border IP joint name, that is, modern integrated elements into the traditional Chinese cultural patterns injected new vitality into the products, and explored the commercial value of Dunhuang Museum IP [7]. For example, the Silk Road Hand Letter was combined with the variety show "This Is Street Dance 3" and the documentary "New Chinese Goods." The high broadcast volume of the program attracted more traffic for Dunhuang culture, which made the young people better understand and love Dunhuang culture, and the international popularity increased simultaneously.

Taking Dunhuang Cultural and creative series bookmarks as an example, it combines offline stores with online shopping apps and has diversified marketing channels.

## 3.2 Analysis of the Marketing Dilemma and Causes of Dunhuang's Cultural and Creative Products

### 3.2.1 Price

Most of Dunhuang's cultural products are slightly more expensive than their counterparts. Generally speaking, the price of a cultural product should be measured by its "functional value + cultural value." In the case of the Dunhuang bookmark, for example, the function has been narrowed down to an audience of people who deal with books, such as teachers, students, office workers who love to read, and the elderly. Most of its functionally similar products are cheaper in the market, ranging from roughly RMB10-50, while Dunhuang bookmarks generally fluctuate up and down from RMB150. This means that their cultural value determines more than 60% of the pricing of Dunhuang bookmarks. However, within these groups, some are not keen on Dunhuang culture, further narrowing the customer base. The local group also considers that there may be some people who cannot afford the high prices, which faces the trend of customers being more critical and demanding in terms of product quality, packaging and price. For example, in the case of the seller's comments on the Lanzhou New District Dunhuang Cultural Creation online Taobao shop, some people reflected that "the outer packaging is hard to say, it is not expensive to say that the cheap is not a cheap gift, but the express packaging does not match the price that the shop wants," "the real finished product is almost more interesting than the picture, but the price is much higher than similar products."

### **3.2.2 Promotion**

There are small areas for improvement in product promotion, such as the need for more use of Netflix marketing or celebrity endorsement promotion methods, and exposure and traffic could be much higher. According to public information collated by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, there are seven new media accounts for the Dunhuang Museum in 2020. Although there are more, the lack of management means that each public performance could be more active and well-built. For example, the Dunhuang Four Seasons bookmark is designed and developed by the Benson to Beauty team; the packaging designer, the bookmark designer, and the overall process designer are all professors and students from Beijing universities, the product quality and strength are good, but the publicity is not enough. Since the product's public launch in February 2021, the corresponding micro store applet has only sold 40. It still needs to be addressed, with its accompanying WeChat exchange group QR code expired long ago. This has led to subsequent people wanting to learn more but needing help to enter the group, which has further affected product sales.

## **3.3 Marketing Countermeasures for Dunhuang's Cultural and Creative Products**

### **3.3.1 Set affordable prices**

Based on an examination of the costs of Dunhuang's innovative products, most Dunhuang products far exceed the prices of other competing products on the market. To ensure product quality, the more affordable Dunhuang's cultural products should be, the better. When the cost of the product is lowered, the number of consumers who buy the product increases, thus achieving a marketing effect that is more profitable and well-known. This will also reduce the probability of forgeries appearing on the market, which will help to build a better brand image and protect traditional Chinese culture.

### **3.3.2 Increase promotion efforts**

In terms of publicity, the Dunhuang Museum could consider creating seven different accounts to create an exclusive IP belonging to this account [8]. Making full use of the new media marketing model, it is ring-fenced in a matrix mode, with interactive communication between accounts on various platforms to give consumers a better understanding of the existence and significance of Dunhuang culture. While promoting the marketing of cultural and creative products has also led to a deeper appreciation of Dunhuang culture in the minds of consumers.

## **4. People-oriented: Marketing Path of Cultural and Creative Products in Modern Society**

### **4.1 Based on Adequate Research, Set the Price of "People-Friendly."**

The cost of cultural and creative products should consider the full use of "functional value + cultural value." Suppose the product far exceeds the price of competing products on the market. In that case, it is difficult for consumer groups to continue to consume expensive and non-practical goods under the psychological premise of shopping around. Under the premise of ensuring product quality, the price of cultural and creative products should be as close to the people as possible. Reducing the cost of products is an effective way to increase the number of consumer groups. For example, preferential activities can be carried out during the 5.18 International Museum Day, the Museum Open Day, and the local festivals of the cultural regions corresponding to the cultural and creative products. At the same time, you can use the major platforms to shoot stock promotional videos for the soft implantation of products and preferential links with activities. The declaration of traditional culture can also attract more consumers to buy.

### **4.2 Respect the Individual Differences of Consumers and Develop Experiential Products**

In this era, everything can be cultural and creative, cultural and creative products from the initial understanding of bookmarks, stationery, and books, The development appears in more and more

diversified cultural and creative products, covering more and more product fields, and now the trendy cultural and innovative products on the market are highly personalized cultural and innovative products because the target customers pay attention to personalized, experiential services, freedom, and aesthetics and are willing to try new things. Therefore, we should integrate various cultural elements into the product according to customer needs and create a story app for each component. Through interesting commentary, customers have a sense of immersive substitution and participation to promote their consumption. Cultural inheritance and inheritance must face the new generation of young people, boring information and rigid conservative means can not win their attention and participation. This is a significant contribution if we are inspired by "cultural and creative" to establish an effective cultural inheritance system [9].

### **4.3 Enrich the Publicity Channels of Products And Shape the Emotional Resonance with Consumers**

Under the social background of today's developed network, various cultural and creative effects can be promoted by independent culture on major social media platforms with their traffic. The mainstream consumer group of cultural and innovative products is the contemporary young people, and the consumption habits of this part of the consumer group are constantly influenced by Amway's growing grass on social media before they go to the e-commerce platform to consume. Each cultural and creative product can be targeted at several major grass-growing platforms of this consumer group, such as Little Red Book, Vibrato, Taobao, etc., to allow consumer groups to "see" this product [10].

In a platform with solid social attributes, you can change the brand hard to choose a KOL with a large number of fans or a KOC with a small number of fans. Let the target consumer groups see their own cultural and creative products through the hose, and then use the herd mentality of the consumer groups to allow consumers to generate resonance and link in the product. The target consumer groups will be interested in this product. The push tag and crowd settings of video ads should be set for young people interested in traditional culture and often browse the national culture and use big data to capture loyal consumer groups for accurate delivery. Each entity cultural and creative museum can create an exclusive online platform to strengthen online interaction and communication with consumers so that the design concept of each cultural and innovative product can be integrated. Creating a background in documentary publicity to let everyone see the story behind it can play a promotional effect. It can also be interactive with the consumer masses so that consumers better understand Chinese traditional culture [11].

Global information connectivity, while promoting cultural and creative products, will also give consumers a deeper understanding of the traditional culture of each country, which is conducive to fostering cultural exchanges and contributing to the coordinated development and harmonious coexistence of the world.

## **5. Conclusion**

Concerning the content discussed above, Dunhuang cultural creation contains the integration of Chinese culture and Buddhism, representing the bearing of Chinese culture. Under the influence of national policies and the "Belt and Road Initiative," Dunhuang's cultural and creative marketing has certain competitive advantages because it has clear target customers, clearly explores and meets their needs, and boldly combines traditional culture to bring them unique aesthetic experiences. However, there are many competitors, such as the cultural and creative products of the Palace Museum, with a more transparent development concept, which is more competitive and cannot be underestimated. The main difficulty facing Dunhuang cultural innovation is that compared with ordinary daily products, the price is high, and it is not easy to get the favor of target consumers. Based on the analysis of Dunhuang Cultural and creative series bookmarks as cases, it is found that compared with the alternatives, due to its higher price, there is a risk of narrowing the customers, in addition to the low publicity activity, low construction, and other problems. Given the advantages of Dunhuang's cultural

and creative products, which are diversified and full of a sense of design and technology and can achieve cooperative sales with multiple platforms, this study proposes a small profit but quick turnover strategy for the price. In addition, this paper presents a unique experience of a virtual APP based on creativity and offers marketing strategies for creating exclusive IP based on publicity.

The overall marketing path for Dunhuang's cultural and creative products should take advantage of its unique policy to compensate for its marketing disadvantages, continue to develop its unique cultural brand IP effect, and improve its marketing shortcomings. This is conducive to a series of other Chinese cultural products that can be drawn upon to expand overseas markets further and bring Chinese culture to the international stage.

Modern cultural and creative industries cannot be separated from the meeting and collision of the world's different cultures. Cultural diversity provides a rich source of materials and ideas for the cultural and creative industries worldwide. Maintaining "people-centered" creative development is the fundamental call and ultimate goal of the cultural and creative sectors and product creation. Artists and performers from all countries have contributed significantly to the inheritance and dissemination of culture by using their creative spirit and hardworking practical abilities.

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