

The Successful Marketing of Litang “Ding zhen” Symbol in the New Media Era Explores the Marketing Strategy of City Image

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Abstract

In November 2020, Ding zhen, a Tibetan boy, inadvertently became popular on the Internet by relying on a short video platform, and his hometown, Litang, also entered the public eye. In just a few months, the construction of “Ding zhen” symbol and the creation of a mimetic environment of “Litang culture” have enabled this small city in western Sichuan to realize the rapid improvement of commercial value. This paper analyzes the shaping and marketing process of “Ding zhen” symbol in the new media environment, and discusses how to realize the positive communication of the city from the phenomenon level of Internet celebrity effect, and realize the urban marketing plan from point to surface.

Keywords

New Media; Symbolization; Mimetic Environment; Urban Marketing.

1. The “Ding zhen” Symbol Shaping in the Mimicry Environment

While many researchers have documented the characteristics of China's growing tourism market, a comprehensive image scale of city brand for tourism has not yet been developed[1]. Lippmann, a famous American scholar, first put forward the term “mimetic environment” in his book “Public Opinion” in 1922. He believed that the formation of mimetic environment is not a “mirror” reproduction of the real objective world, but a new structured environment formed after the selection and processing of different information transmission chains. Specific communication space has a significant restriction and guidance effect on public cognition and behavior [2]. In the new media era, with the rapid development of streaming media software, the construction and operation mode of “mimetic environment” have changed accordingly. The “mimetic environment” is not only dominated by a single communication subject, but also has a richer connotation. The main mode includes “individuals + information with communication power”, “influential people + information” and so on.

The above two modes have been skillfully used by major brokerage companies to shape the image of Internet celebrities, and gradually improve the industrial chain of “network platform person-setting shaping - stable flow - live delivery with goods”. However, for the purpose of promoting regional development and construction, the establishment of symbol image is still in the stage of development and exploration. How to make character symbols become regional symbols and then show cultural symbols to the outside world can be found from Ding zhen's case.

In November 2020, photographer Hu Bo chose Ding Zhen to complete his shooting and uploaded the seven-second short film to Douyin platform, where it was widely disseminated. It has been widely shared on social media platforms, with the topic being read by 5 billion people on Sina Weibo [3]. In the video, Ding Zhen is dressed in traditional Tibetan costume and has a childish smile on her dark face. The video breaks the stereotype of men in the plateau region as burly and rugged. Ding Zhen has become an Internet celebrity phenomenon. The construction

of mimetic environment was initially composed of the natural scenery of Ganzi region presented in a single video and Ding Zhen's honest character image, which initially delivered the keywords of beautiful scenery and honest people in Ganzi region to the audience of streaming media platforms.

Until he signed a contract with Litang Cultural Tourism Investment and Development Co., LTD., a subsidiary of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of Litang County, and became the tourism image ambassador of Litang County, the simple image publicity of Internet celebrity was given a more profound meaning. On November 25 of the same year, the short documentary "Ding Zhen's World" was released on the Internet, turning the spotlight from Ding Zhen to the land behind Ding Zhen. On November 27, the hashtag "Actually Ding Zhen in Sichuan" hit a new high with a photo of Ding Zhen. In the "battle of Ding zhen" between Tibet and Sichuan, netizens not only have a further understanding of Ding zhen's hometown, but also feel the beauty of various places through the interaction of official microblogs in major cities. Thus, the "Dingzhen" symbol has realized the transformation from individual to regional symbol.

2. The "Ding zhen" Symbol Traffic Realization

With the rapid popularization of fragmented streaming media platforms, the advantages and disadvantages of traffic are also extremely obvious. On the one hand, streaming media platforms have a large number of audiences and a wide range of communication, so they can gain a high degree of discussion in a short period of time; On the other hand, if there is no new content to maintain the short-term high popularity, the traffic will be lost quickly. Maintaining exposure is an important way to stabilize personal traffic, and Ding zhen's business activities have been adhering to this principle.

Litang County Culture and Tourism Company uses the name "Ding zhen Pearl" as a registered trademark for 26 categories of goods. Ding Zhen attended the tourism roadshow promotion meeting of "Best Destination of Tibetan Cultural Tourism - Litang 2021" in Chengdu as a tourism ambassador. His personal IP is transformed into a commercial brand, and through his personal influence, he names products with regional characteristics, which not only promotes the sales of products, but also actively promotes the expansion and publicity of regional cultural symbols.

At the beginning of 2021, Ding Zhen participated in a number of local Spring Festival parties, showing national culture through the stage, and the heat continued to radiate. Ritang became a hot spot, with a 620% increase in searches on Ctrip, a 89% increase in hotel bookings in Ganzi Prefecture compared with the same period in 2019, and a nearly 20% increase in ticket orders to Kangding Airport and Daocheng Yading Airport as destinations [4]. In the following year, Ding Zhen frequently appeared in various variety shows, maintained regular exposure, promoted Tibetan culture, and showed the simplicity and generosity of the Tibetan people through his personality charm. Under the positive influence of Ding Zhen, compatriots from Ding Zhen's hometown spontaneously promoted the beauty and food of their hometown through the Internet platform, and jointly built a bridge between the plateau and the outside world.

3. Enlightenment of Dingzhen Symbol to City Image Marketing

Firstly, the characteristics of the symbol should be grasped and the city image should be closely related. In order to achieve the purpose of city marketing, the symbol characteristics should be closely related to the city characteristics when choosing the symbol shaping. After the initial expansion of attention, there will be a better perspective to promote the city. In the process of shaping Ding zhen symbols, individuals, as the character symbols of a region or a nation, need

to find a balance to achieve the common development of both regions and individuals. The propaganda videos related to Ding Zhen contain many "knowledge points" such as Litang's customs, ethnic beliefs and so on. When the audience is attracted by Ding Zhen, they will also pay attention to his hometown. Ding Zhen's simple nature is closely connected with the beautiful scenery of Litang, and the two complement each other, presenting the subject and content of communication to the public in a more natural way, so that the city image and personal label can be integrated.

Secondly, the rational use of new media to achieve a full range of city image output. After the establishment of individual symbols, the use of new media channels to achieve communication. From the perspective of individuals, around the living environment, the introduction of local culture, scenery, etc., based on characters or other symbols to complete the city propaganda works. When the public is highly concerned about individual symbols such as character symbols, seize the opportunity of publicity, stabilize the "tap water" flow of streaming media platforms, and lay a foundation for the subsequent display of urban characteristics.

In the era of traffic, we must face problems such as hot spot change and content homogeneity. Maintaining follow-up heat and content update is the key task of publicity and distribution. In addition to local programs, network variety shows and public welfare activities can maintain exposure. In addition, attaching eye-catching "labels" to cities through symbols can not only increase the exposure of individual symbols, but also make cities more widely publicized. Nowadays, the development of "cultural, tourism, sports, agriculture and business" industrial integration is a new exploration of industrial development in Litang County in the new era, which is the necessary way to crack the current industrial industry pain points and promote industrial transformation and upgrading.[5].

4. Conclusion

In the city propaganda work, Litang city image marketing realized by "Ding zhen" symbol is a very representative successful case. The work focus of this case can be summarized as follows: taking the new media as the carrier, taking the local characteristics as the foundation, taking the realization of the city image "going out" as the development premise, and realizing the goal of local humanities promotion through individual symbols. This provides a constructive guiding scheme for urban development and urban image construction in the new media era.

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