

Let the "Ancient Village" No Longer Be "Antique", and Make the "Rural Area" Extremely Popular —— An Exploration of the Path of Short Videos Empowering the Cultural Tourism of Traditional Villages in Jiangsu Province

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ABSTRACT

With the improvement of people's living standards, the demand for tourism is also constantly upgrading. Traditional ancient villages, as treasures of Chinese historical and cultural heritage, have become popular tourist destinations. From 2017 when the country first proposed the implementation of the "Rural Revitalization Strategy" to 2024 when the demonstration work of concentrated and continuous protection and utilization of traditional villages was launched. Against this backdrop, the tourism of traditional villages has emerged. However, apart from the common problems of serious commercialization and homogenization, there are still many high-quality ancient villages that are neglected. How to make ancient villages no longer "antique" and let rural areas regain their vitality is the key issue discussed in this article. In recent years, the short video industry has risen. In 2023, among the newly added 1,129,187,000 hours of Internet video programs throughout the year, short videos accounted for 5,474,626,000 hours. Internet users watched an average of about 3 hours of Internet audio-visual programs (including short videos) per day. There were 732 million annual paying users of Internet videos, and the number of users uploading short videos exceeded 750 million. The income from short videos, online live broadcasts, and other sources was 428.252 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 33.39%. ^[1] This article will start by analyzing the current problems faced by traditional villages. Through a survey of the satisfaction of tourists in traditional village tourism, it will explore a new direction for promoting traditional village tourism through short videos, so as to boost rural revitalization.

KEYWORDS

Cultural Tourism; Short Videos; Rural Revitalization; Traditional Villages

1 The Current Development Dilemmas Faced by Traditional Ancient Villages

1.1 The problem of homogenization in traditional villages is remarkable

Traditional villages contain rich cultural heritage tourism resources and have high historical, cultural, artistic, scientific, and economic values. Most traditional villages have vigorously developed tourism after being included in the protection list. However, this tourism-oriented commercial development has become a stereotyped model, and most of them are quite similar. Village governments often attach great importance to the commercial replication of village culture, without deeply exploring the cultural values contained in traditional villages. As a result, tourists only stay at the level of "casual observation", and it is difficult for them to experience the authentic culture and life of traditional villages, and they have no way to understand the profound cultural heritage.

1.2 The development of traditional villages deviates from the essence of village culture

In order to cater to tourists' curiosity about village culture, various sacrificial activities divorced from, wedding custom culture performances divorced from pure love, and folk handicrafts divorced from the traditional fine craftsmanship are successively "fragmentally" displayed. Village culture is presented to tourists in a "fast-food" way. This consumptive development makes village culture gradually drift away from daily life, which is not conducive to the inheritance and development of village culture.

2 The Tendency of the National Overall Policy on Cultural Tourism

2.1 The overall national policy on the development of traditional villages

The "Report on the Development Index of Rural Tourism in China" points out that the upsurge of rural tourism in China will continue for more than 10 years in the future. It is expected that by 2025, the number of rural tourism visitors will reach nearly 3 billion person-times. Tourists' consumption demands drive the development of village tourism, and many villages have formed a characteristic tourism industry of "farmhouse entertainment + homestays + experiences". Relying on the unique resources and cultural characteristics of rural areas will drive economic development and realize the dynamic protection of traditional villages.

2.2 The specific implementation of cultural tourism policies in Jiangsu Province

As a major economic province, Jiangsu Province has numerous villages. As of 2023, 79 villages have been included in the National List of Traditional Villages. The Department of Culture and Tourism of Jiangsu Province recently issued the "Several Measures for Promoting Cultural and Tourism Consumption", which further promotes the recovery, innovation, and high-quality development of the cultural and tourism industry in the province from aspects such as guiding and promoting the construction of cultural and tourism projects and promoting the expansion and improvement of cultural and tourism consumption. It emphasizes deepening the integrated development of industries, including: First, strengthening the construction of cultural and tourism integration carriers. Encourage all localities to develop tourism performance projects to enrich tourists' cultural experiences; extend the cultural and tourism industry chain. Promote intangible cultural heritage projects to enter scenic areas and cultivate a number of intangible cultural heritage + tourism experience demonstration sites. Second, creating a digital cultural and tourism industry. Promote the deep integration of modern information technologies such as big data, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence with the cultural and tourism industry; encourage the use of new media, virtual reality, and other technical means to organize and launch more online exhibition, display, and performance projects to stimulate people's willingness to experience offline.

The specific approaches include: using "digital infrastructure" to stimulate rural development and creating a "digital brain" for rural areas, as well as relying on virtual reality technology to make traditional villages "come alive".

2.3 Jiangsu Province provides high-quality technical support for the development of cultural tourism

As a key increment in the development of Jiangsu Province, the digital economy is inseparable from scientific and technological innovation. Over the past decade, Jiangsu has continuously implemented large-scale enterprise technological transformation to promote industrial transformation and upgrading and accelerate the development of intelligent manufacturing. Especially in recent years, it has taken the intelligent transformation and digital transformation of enterprises as an important starting point for promoting industrial digitalization and digital industrialization. However, currently, problems such as the idea of "valuing preservation over growth", the tendency of "valuing appearance over essence", the mentality of "being too eager for quick success", the phenomenon of "being superficial and not practical", the situation of "government enthusiasm and enterprise indifference", and the "shortage" of digital economy talents have emerged. It is necessary to take corresponding countermeasures in combination with the actual situation of Jiangsu Province. First, fully stimulate the vitality and potential of enterprises in developing the digital economy; second, establish the thinking of "increment" in the digital economy and continuously expand the development scale of the digital economy; third, adhere to the original intention of digital economy development and focus on the direction of the digital economy; fourth, adjust measures to local conditions and find the most suitable development path for oneself; fifth, actively explore effective starting points to promote sustainable development; sixth, consolidate the talent foundation for the development of the digital economy.

3 The Promotion of Cultural Tourism in Traditional Villages by Short Video Communication

Short videos are an important part of the digital economy. They refer to the video content played on various new media platforms, which is suitable for watching in a mobile state and during short leisure time and is pushed frequently, ranging from a few seconds to a few minutes. The content integrates themes such as skill sharing, humor and wackiness, fashion trends, social hotspots, street interviews, public welfare education, advertising creativity, and commercial customization. Due to the short content, it can be made into a single piece or become a series of columns. It has the characteristics of a simple production process, low production threshold, and strong participation, and it has more communication value than live broadcasts. On March 29, 2023, the "Research Report on the Development of China's Internet Audio-Visual Industry (2023)", which is known as the vane of China's Internet audio-visual industry, was released in Chengdu. The report shows that the scale of short - video users in China has reached 1.012 billion, penetrating into various groups of Internet users. The scale of online live - streaming users has reached 751 million, making it the second - largest application in online audio - visual.^[2]

4 User Satisfaction Survey on the Promotion of Cultural Tourism by Short Video Communication

In March 2020, the China Internet Network Information Center released the 45th "Statistical Report on the Development of the Internet in China". The scale of short - video users in China was 773 million, accounting for 85.6% of the total number of Internet users. Short videos have played an important and positive role in driving rural tourism and promoting the sales of agricultural products.^[3]

4.1 Summary Based on the Survey Analysis Report of the Understanding Media of Ancient Villages and Consistency

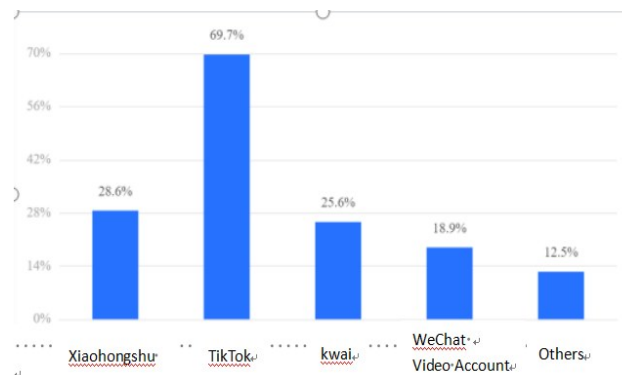


Figure 1 Distribution Map of the Media for Understanding Ancient Villages

4.1.1 Most tourists obtain information about ancient village tourism through Douyin

As can be seen from the chart, 69.7% of the people mainly learn about ancient village tourism through Douyin, and a small number of people get the information through media such as Xiaohongshu, Kwai, and WeChat Video Account. Compared with traditional texts and pictures, short videos are more intuitive. They can deepen users' impressions, effectively occupy users' minds, and improve the effect of recommending and promoting products. Therefore, most tourists obtain relevant information about ancient village tourism through Douyin.

4.1.2 There is still a situation where the actual feelings during the trip are inconsistent with the media recommendations

According to the chart, 49.42% of people think that the actual feelings are relatively consistent with the media recommendations, 25.17% think they are generally consistent, 20.32% think they are completely consistent, 3.7% think they are relatively inconsistent, and 1.39% think they are completely inconsistent. At present, the relevant departments have been vigorously cracking down on false propaganda of scenic spots, encouraging tourists to safeguard their rights through convenient means, and the management departments also conduct regular rectification and punishment. However, most people think that the actual experience is relatively or generally consistent with the media recommendations. Therefore, the relevant departments still need to make great efforts to address the current situation.

4.1.3 Most tourists learn about and choose accommodation and dining through social media platforms

Nowadays, short videos have become a serious disaster area for plagiarism. Some high-quality short videos, without permission, are slightly processed by "content 搬运工" and "video editors" and become tools to attract traffic. Short videos of the same content are "cut off at the beginning and end" and repeatedly appear on different platforms, which not only makes the audience confused but also troubles the original video creators, greatly restricting the creative environment of the short video industry. The development shortcomings of short videos are indeed worrying. There is a serious problem of homogeneous content creation, with old tricks such as imitation, cute pet shows, and funny content lacking in innovation; platforms only focus on short-term profits and lack long-term planning; there is weak supervision and lack of copyright protection, and vulgar content and creative plagiarism are prevalent. To seek long-term development, short video platforms must remove the three "stumbling blocks" of a lack of high-quality content, insufficient profitability, and weak supervision. Traditional villages actively cooperate with new media platforms to increase their popularity, but problems such as cultural homogenization and information distortion still exist ^[4]. The visual and textual expressions show unprecedented diversity, which enriches the information content but also gives rise to many problems, such as visual deception ^[5].

5 Development Suggestions for Short Videos Empowering Ancient Village Tourism

5.1 Produce short - video content based on the tourist satisfaction survey

After conducting a satisfaction analysis by constructing a structural equation model and conducting in - depth interviews with traditional indigenous people and merchants, it is not difficult to find that producing short - video content based on customer satisfaction surveys is the key.

5.1.1 The local environment and characteristic products are the keys to influencing tourism development

The nodes closest to "tourists" include "garbage", "environment", "handicrafts", "business", "fame", etc. This shows the promoting role of tourists in the development of the ancient town's tourism industry. From the environment to the economy and then to the quality of life of local residents, the activities of the tourist group are closely related to the development of the local economic environment and the quality of life of local residents, warning tourists to restrain themselves and travel in a civilized manner during the trip.

5.1.2 Buildings and handicrafts with characteristic historical and cultural connotations are the core elements driving tourism development

Nodes such as "history", "culture", "economy", and "quality of life" are closely linked to the central node of "buildings". On the one hand, it can reflect that the cultural characteristics of the ancient town are relatively prominent, and both the history and local culture can be reflected in the buildings. On the other hand, it can be seen that buildings and handicrafts with characteristic historical and cultural connotations are the core elements driving the development of the local tourism economy. We should respect the traditional cultural characteristics of ancient villages in various places, combine cultural characteristics with the tourism industry, and generate effective driving forces for the positive development of the industry. Using e-commerce for product sales will be a breakthrough in the tourism economy development of ancient towns.

5.2 Suggestions on external publicity strategies and communication and cooperation for traditional villages

5.2.1 Strengthen the publicity of ancient villages and broaden the publicity channels

Based on the current situation that 56.2% of tourists have never been to ancient villages and 33.3% of tourists said they are willing to travel to ancient villages through interviews, it is recommended to start with actively publicizing ancient villages, broaden the publicity channels, and strengthen the publicity of ancient villages. Unite the power of new media, use new media platforms such as Xiaohongshu and Douyin to promote ancient village tourism, cooperate with travel bloggers for promotion and distribution.

5.2.2 Innovate new media communication methods and mobilize tourists' participation willingness

According to the survey and conclusions, 74.6% of tourists learned about ancient villages through short-video platforms such as Douyin and Kwai, and most of them are young people. About 20.2% of tourists learned about ancient villages through WeChat Video Account and QQ Channel. Therefore, innovate new media communication methods, innovate videos in batches and at different levels to serve people of different ages and with different hobbies. According to the needs and concerns of different groups, publicize various characteristic scenic spots and traditional cultural activities, actively mobilize tourists' participation willingness, make tourists willing to come to ancient villages, and be willing to promote ancient villages after visiting.

5.3 Suggestions on improving and implementing the e-commerce live-streaming platform and breaking through product sales channels

5.3.1 Tap the characteristic resources of the village

Traditional villages usually have rich cultural, historical, natural, and handicraft resources. When developing live-streaming e-commerce, the first step is to deeply tap these characteristic resources and find the unique selling points of the village.

5.3.2 Cultivate live-streaming e-commerce talents

Live-streaming e-commerce requires certain professional skills and knowledge, including live-streaming skills, product introduction, interactive communication, etc. Therefore, traditional villages should actively cultivate live-streaming e-commerce talents, and can improve the live-streaming e-commerce capabilities of villagers by holding training courses and inviting professionals for guidance.

5.3.3 Build a live - streaming e - commerce platform

To facilitate villagers' live - streaming sales, a special live - streaming e - commerce platform can be built. This platform can integrate the characteristic resources of the village and provide one - stop services such as product display, transaction, and logistics.

5.3.4 Optimize the logistics and distribution system

Logistics and distribution are important links in live - streaming e - commerce, which are directly related to consumers' shopping experience. Traditional villages should strengthen cooperation with logistics companies to establish an efficient logistics and distribution system to ensure that products can be delivered to consumers in a timely and accurate manner.

5.3.5 Strengthen brand publicity and promotion

Brand is the core competitiveness of live - streaming e - commerce. Traditional villages should attach importance to brand building and strengthen brand publicity and promotion through various channels. For example, we can use social media, short - video platforms, etc. for publicity to improve the popularity and influence of the village.

5.3.6 Pay attention to product quality and after - sales service

The success of live - streaming e - commerce is inseparable from high - quality products and perfect after - sales service. Traditional villages should ensure that the products sold are of high quality and provide perfect after - sales service to solve the problems encountered by consumers during the purchase and use process, and enhance consumers' trust and loyalty.

6 Conclusion

The rise of short videos has provided new opportunities and possibilities for the development of cultural tourism in traditional ancient villages. This research focuses on the traditional ancient villages in Jiangsu. Through a comprehensive analysis of their real - world dilemmas, policy environments, communication effectiveness, and user needs, it reveals the key role of short videos in activating the cultural tourism resources of ancient villages, rebuilding cultural identity, and constructing a modern communication ecology. In the context of rural revitalization and the deep integration of culture and tourism, short videos are not only technical tools but also media for cultural inheritance, bridges for urban - rural dialogue, and boosters for industrial empowerment. The traditional ancient villages in Jiangsu carry the unique genes of Jiangnan culture. Their protection and development need to respond to the diversified needs of modern cultural tourism consumption and also explore innovative paths for cultural activation in the digital wave. Based on the research data, the suggestions on short - video empowerment put forward in this paper, from optimizing communication content, adapting platform algorithms, developing cultural IPs to constructing multi - party collaborative mechanisms, all point to a core goal: through the accurate communication and emotional connection of short videos, transform the historical context of ancient villages into perceivable, participatory, and sustainable cultural tourism experiences, and then achieve the symbiosis and common prosperity of cultural value and economic value.

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