

# Study on Pathways for the Innovative Dissemination of China's Outstanding Traditional Culture through Digital Media Technology

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## ABSTRACT

China's outstanding traditional culture has a long and illustrious history and is profound and extensive, representing the crystallisation of the wisdom of Chinese civilisation. We are currently in the digital and intelligent era, and the widespread application of digital media technology has not only introduced new forms of dissemination for China's outstanding traditional culture but has also strengthened cultural confidence. However, issues such as the homogenisation of dissemination formats, the standardisation of content, and the erosion of value transmission remain prominent. Exploring innovative dissemination pathways is the direction for future development.

## KEYWORDS

digital media technology; outstanding traditional Chinese culture; innovative dissemination pathways

## 1 The Theoretical Foundation for Digital Media Technology Empowering the Dissemination of China's Outstanding Traditional Culture

### 1.1 Basic Concepts of Digital Media Technology

Digital media technology is highly convergent, and whilst there is currently no clear conceptual definition, many scholars have offered their own interpretations. The 2005 White Paper on the Development of Digital Media Technology in China defines digital media technology as: a comprehensive process centred on digital content, utilising modern networks as the primary medium of dissemination, and relying on a comprehensive service system to reach end-users. Zhou Yang and Zhou Weijie define digital media technology as: a technical approach built upon computer and information technology, integrating information processing, computing, networking, audio-visual, and communications technologies; capable of comprehensively processing text, sound, images, video, and animation; and transforming traditional artistic designs into digital works<sup>[1]</sup>. Wang Fang and Zeng Xie define it as an interdisciplinary field characterised by the deep integration of science and art, guided by information science and digital technology, grounded in mass communication theory, and applied across the fields of culture, art, commerce, education and management<sup>[2]</sup>.

### 1.2 Advantages of Digital Media Technology over Traditional Media

Traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television are relatively limited in both form and content when it comes to information dissemination; audiences take a long time to access information, and interactive communication is constrained by temporal and spatial limitations<sup>[3]</sup>. The advent of digital media technology has shifted people from a passive role in receiving information to one where they can participate in every stage of information transmission through various interactive formats, offering enhanced human-computer interaction. Digital media technology has also broadened the methods of information delivery, integrating multiple formats such as text, images, video and live streaming. Furthermore, by leveraging big data and algorithmic technologies, it delivers content that better meets the specific needs of different users, making it more suitable for audiences of varying ages and interests. Furthermore, through various modern technological means, digital media technology enables people to enjoy more engaging, authentic and immersive experiences, as if they were physically present in a real-life setting. It can also realise thematic experiences that are impossible to achieve in reality.

### 1.3 The Unique Features and Typical Examples of Digital Media Technology in Cultural Dissemination

The unique aspect of digital media technology in cultural dissemination lies in its ability to transform abstract cultural symbols into concrete, tangible experiences, thereby bridging the gap between traditional culture and contemporary audiences. For example, the programme \*The Night Banquet of the Tang Palace\*, launched by Henan Satellite TV, utilises immersive set design and innovative stage effects to present traditional dance in a narrative format, introducing a new form of television presentation<sup>[4]</sup>. Similarly, the Palace Museum's "Digital Forbidden City" project enables audiences worldwide to conveniently appreciate the museum's precious artefacts through online exhibitions and digital

collections, highlighting the advantages of digital technology in cultural dissemination <sup>[5]</sup>. Furthermore, on short-video platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou, a large number of intangible cultural heritage inheritors are using live streaming and short videos to showcase traditional crafts—such as Suzhou embroidery, shadow puppetry and guqin performances—breathing new life into these cultural treasures and garnering widespread public attention and the affection of younger audiences.

## **2 The Practical Value of Digital Media Technology in Empowering the Dissemination of China's Outstanding Traditional Culture**

### **2.1 Infusing New Vitality into China's Outstanding Traditional Culture**

China's outstanding traditional culture is the spiritual lifeblood of the Chinese nation; however, in today's fast-paced world, traditional culture faces the dilemma of being 'too highbrow for the masses'. Through innovative forms of expression, digital media technology has brought traditional culture to life. For example, 'Honour of Kings' draws upon Chinese historical narratives and mythological legends to create a series of 'national trend' heroes, whose abilities are linked to their historical origins. Simultaneously, the game has launched skin series such as 'Dunhuang Flying Apsaras' and 'Classic of Mountains and Seas', transforming mural art and mythical beasts into visual symbols, allowing players to experience the profound depth and enduring legacy of Chinese culture whilst playing.

### **2.2 Enhancing Public Cultural Confidence and Cultural Influence**

Cultural confidence is a more fundamental, profound and enduring force. The emergence of digital media technology has enabled the dissemination of China's outstanding traditional culture to transcend geographical and social boundaries, reaching a wider world. Traditional culture is no longer confined to classrooms, museums and academic research, but has entered the daily lives of ordinary people. Through short videos, live streaming and interactive experiences, it enhances people's sense of cultural identity and pride. Through overseas platforms such as YouTube and TikTok, a vast amount of high-quality Chinese cultural content has been accessed and embraced by a global audience. For instance, Li Ziqi's videos depicting rural life have showcased China's traditional agricultural culture and aesthetic of living to the world, garnering tens of millions of overseas followers; the overseas dissemination of literary works such as *The Three-Body Problem*, leveraging the power of digital platforms, has enhanced the international influence of Chinese science fiction literature.

### **2.3 Promoting the Development of the Cultural Economy to Achieve Common Prosperity**

Digital technology permeates the entire process of the cultural industry—from creative production and content creation to dissemination and operations—giving rise to new cultural sectors such as digital publishing, digital film and television, digital art, and digital entertainment, thereby driving the iterative upgrading of the cultural industry <sup>[6]</sup>. For instance, the Palace Museum has achieved a transformation from a 'cultural relics conservation unit' to a 'giant in the cultural and creative industry' through the development of digital cultural and creative products, online exhibitions, and IP licensing; its annual sales of cultural and creative products have now exceeded several billion yuan. The deep integration of digital media technology with traditional culture has given rise to new business models such as 'digital cultural and creative products' and the 'national trend economy', injecting strong momentum into the development of the cultural economy. By leveraging digital technology to achieve industrialisation and marketisation, traditional cultural resources have not only expanded cultural influence but also created tangible economic value.

## **3 Practical Challenges in Empowering the Dissemination of China's Outstanding Traditional Culture through Digital Media Technology**

### **3.1 At the Level of Dissemination Formats: Monotonous Dissemination Formats**

Although digital media technology provides a wealth of dissemination tools, in reality, many forms of traditional cultural dissemination still suffer from a lack of diversity and innovation. Most traditional cultural content remains confined to simple text-and-image displays or the reposting of short videos, failing to fully utilise the technological advantages of VR/AR and interactive games. This monotonous dissemination model fails to meet people's expectations for immersive and interactive experiences. Many projects merely transfer offline content directly to online platforms without truly leveraging the interactive and participatory features of digital media, meaning that the empowerment

provided by technology remains superficial.

### 3.2 Content Level: Homogenisation of Content

Influenced by a 'traffic-first' mindset, much of the current dissemination of traditional culture lacks in-depth exploration of cultural significance and innovative expression, resulting in content of varying quality. In pursuit of traffic, many creators blindly imitate popular IPs—such as Hanfu or ancient-style music—leading to content that lacks depth and individuality. This homogenisation lowers content quality, diminishes the uniqueness and depth of traditional culture, and significantly reduces the effectiveness of dissemination. Once a particular format becomes popular, it is widely replicated; content across different platforms and organisations becomes strikingly similar, with originality and cultural substance being diluted, ultimately leading to aesthetic fatigue among the audience.

### 3.3 Dissemination Effectiveness: The Erosion of Value Transmission

Against the backdrop of mass entertainment, 'influencer-style' video content influences young people's values. To cater to fast-paced viewing habits and mainstream aesthetics, short videos on intangible cultural heritage often suffer from oversimplification and entertainment-oriented adaptations, resulting in an inadequate transmission of cultural values<sup>[7]</sup>. This leads to cultural values not being fully conveyed. When certain digital media technologies are applied to the dissemination of traditional culture, there is a tendency to prioritise form over substance. Some projects excessively pursue technical effects and visual spectacle without delving deeply into or conveying the core values of traditional culture; the content remains superficial, lacking intellectual depth and spiritual resonance. Such dissemination, which neglects cultural value, not only fails to effectively preserve and promote traditional culture but may also lead audiences to misunderstand it, treating traditional culture as a mere spectacle for visual consumption. Technology is merely a means of dissemination; the cultural essence is the key. Without this cultural essence, even the most dazzling form cannot achieve genuine cultural transmission.

## 4 Optimal Pathways for Digital Media Technology to Empower the Dissemination of China's Outstanding Traditional Culture

### 4.1 Creating Interactive Cultural Experience Games

To break free from the constraints of monotonous dissemination formats, we must fully leverage digital media technologies to create immersive, interactive cultural experiences. Developing immersive experience projects: Vigorously promote the application of technologies such as VR/AR and holographic projection in museums and cultural attractions, for example, by creating projects like 'Digital Dunhuang' and 'Virtual Terracotta Warriors', enabling audiences to 'touch' history and 'engage in dialogue' with cultural artefacts. Developing interactive games and applications: Integrating elements of traditional culture into game design, such as developing puzzle games based on the 'Along the River During the Qingming Festival' scroll, or using AI technology to facilitate 'virtual dialogues' with ancient scholars, enabling audiences to learn about and experience traditional culture whilst being entertained. Creating an integrated online-offline communication matrix: Utilising online platforms such as live streaming and short videos to drive traffic, combined with offline exhibitions, intangible cultural heritage markets and other events, to form a closed-loop communication system characterised by "online buzz and offline experience".

### 4.2 Cross-media Content Integration and Revitalisation

Robert McKee once said: "A beautifully told story is like a symphony, in which structure, setting, characters, genre and ideas merge into a seamless whole"<sup>[8]</sup>. To overcome the challenge of content homogenisation, we must adhere to the principle that "content is king" and create high-quality content that is profound, heartfelt and distinctive. Deeply explore cultural significance: Organise collaborations between experts, scholars and creators to systematically examine and provide contemporary interpretations of traditional culture, avoiding the simplistic appropriation and exploitation of cultural symbols. For example, when creating traditional-style music, one should not only use traditional instruments but also delve deeply into the spiritual essence of poetry and classical allusions. Encouraging originality and personalised expression: Support creators from different fields in cross-disciplinary collaboration, encouraging them to interpret traditional culture through their own perspectives and methods, thereby fostering a creative ecosystem where a hundred flowers bloom. Establishing content review and guidance mechanisms: Platform operators should strengthen the review of traditional cultural content, putting a stop to vulgar or trivialised interpretations, whilst using algorithms to recommend high-quality content and guide creative trends.

### 4.3 Establishing a Feedback System for Dissemination Effectiveness

To prevent the dilution of cultural values, it is essential to establish a scientific feedback system for dissemination effectiveness, ensuring that technological applications serve the transmission of cultural values. Develop multi-dimensional evaluation metrics: focus not only on traffic indicators such as click-through rates and view counts, but also incorporate qualitative metrics such as cultural resonance, spiritual enrichment and social impact to comprehensively assess dissemination outcomes. Strengthen audience research and engagement: Through methods such as questionnaires, user interviews and comment analysis, we must promptly understand audience feedback and needs regarding disseminated content, and continuously optimise dissemination strategies. Reinforce the sense of responsibility among disseminators: We must guide disseminators to adopt a correct cultural perspective, treating the inheritance and promotion of China's outstanding traditional culture as their core mission, whilst avoiding the misuse of technology and the prioritisation of traffic above all else.

Digital media technology presents a historic opportunity for the innovative dissemination of China's outstanding traditional culture, whilst also posing unprecedented challenges. We must clearly recognise that technology is the means, whilst culture is the essence. In the process of leveraging digital media technology to empower the dissemination of traditional culture, we must adhere to the principle that 'technology is the body, culture is the soul'. By shaping interactive experiences, creating high-quality content and establishing a scientific feedback system, we can achieve a deep integration of technology and culture. Only in this way can we carry forward the nation's spiritual traditions from the perspective of world culture and human civilisation, enrich and create a contemporary spirit of aesthetics and art that embodies national characteristics, national character, the features of the era, and human sentiments<sup>[9]</sup>, thereby more effectively promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of China's fine traditional culture, and more vigorously advancing the construction of socialist culture with Chinese characteristics and the modern civilisation of the Chinese nation.

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