

A Study on Optimization of Marketing Strategies for Ningxia's Cultural Tourism under the Perspective of Global Tourism

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Abstract: With the rapid development of tourism in China, global tourism, as a new concept of tourism development, has gradually become a new engine to drive local economic growth. Ningxia, as an essential part of Northwest China, boasts rich natural landscapes and a profound cultural heritage, making it an ideal place for developing global tourism. However, there are still many deficiencies in the marketing strategies of cultural tourism in Ningxia, which urgently need to be optimized to meet the demands of the tourism market in the new era. The present study endeavors to explore avenues for optimizing the marketing strategies of cultural tourism in Ningxia from the perspective of global tourism, and using SWOT analysis aiming to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the sustainable development of cultural tourism in Ningxia.

Keywords: Global Tourism, Ningxia, Cultural Tourism, Marketing Strategy, Optimization Research.

1. Introduction

The Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region is renowned for its rich cultural heritage and natural resources, such as the Yellow River civilization, relics of the Silk Road, and the unique Xi Xia culture, providing unique conditions for the development of global tourism [1]. Through the integration of culture and tourism, Ningxia not only showcases Chinese heritage but also helps the world understand China [2]. Although limited by economic and transportation factors, the spatial distribution of tourism urbanization in Ningxia is uneven [3]. However, thanks to its geographical location, Ningxia occupies a high status and influence in the tourism relations of provinces along the Silk Road Economic Belt [4]. Against the backdrop of the development of global tourism, traditional marketing methods have been struggling to meet the demands of tourists in the new era. The cultural tourism industry in Ningxia still faces inherent issues such as insufficient cultural creativity, talent shortages, and a single form of tourism business [5]. This paper aims to explore how to better integrate Ningxia's unique cultural elements into modern tourism under the perspective of global tourism, further optimize the development of global tourism destinations, innovate and optimize the marketing strategies of Ningxia's cultural tourism market, promote the common progress of regional culture and tourism

industry through the integration of culture and tourism, enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of Ningxia's tourism, and promote the sustainable development of the local economy.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Global Tourism and Culture

Global tourism refers to a new regional development concept and model that takes tourism as the leading industry in a certain area, optimizes and enhances the regional economic and social resources in an all-round and systematic manner, achieves the organic integration of regional resources, the integrated development of industries, and the co-construction and sharing of society, driving and promoting the coordinated development of economy and society through tourism [6]. Zhang Jun believed that with tourism as the guide, the purpose of global tourism is to "continuously enhance regional competitiveness" and "improve people's quality of life," while the relationship between culture and tourism is inseparable and mutually reinforcing [7]. Culture is the soul of tourism, and tourism is an important carrier of culture [8]. Song Heyou emphasized the importance of cultural heritage resources, considering them not only as a valuable asset of the Chinese nation but also as an important foundation for tourism development [9]. Zhang Mingzhi's research shows that the integration of global culture and global tourism, as an innovation in the tourism industry development model, helps to enhance the level and quality of the tourism industry and can effectively promote the evolution of the tourism industry from a ticket economy to a leisure economy, from a single industry to diversified development [10]. Liu Xianzhong thought that Ningxia possesses unique ethnic advantages and cultural background and specifically mentions the importance of minority cultures and the ancient Silk Road, suggesting that Ningxia should rely on its historical culture to create and develop global tourism [2].

2.2. Global Tourism and Economy

Wang Xingdan mentioned that the origin of the "global tourism" concept is "tourism urbanization," indicating the inseparable link between global tourism and the regional economy [11]. Liu Shan believed that Ningxia, as a typical representative of the economically underdeveloped western regions with rich cultural and tourism resources, should fully integrate tourism resources to enhance the agglomeration and diffusion effects of the tourism industry, thereby promoting regional economic growth and urbanization [3]. Ren Yan demonstrated that the development of tourism and the economy promote each other, where tourism development can drive regional economic growth, and the development of the regional economy can provide better infrastructure and services for tourism, forming a virtuous cycle [12]. Dai Daqi, taking Mizhi County in Shaanxi Province as an example, proposed that building a tourism and culture industry based on the concept of global tourism is an important way to solve the socio-economic development problems of impoverished counties [13].

2.3. Cultural Tourism and Marketing

Yang Meng argued that as early as the beginning of the 1980s, travelers' preferences shifted from sightseeing to cultural tourism, making the integration and innovation of the cultural tourism market imperative [14]. Huang Huanhuan believed that the traditional marketing methods of the tourism industry have many drawbacks, causing not only limited popularity of tourist cities and stagnant passenger flow but also high travel costs and a poor experience for travelers [15]. Liu Na considered that the advantage of the cultural tourism industry in the northwest region lies not only in its natural landscapes, distinct from coastal cities, but also in its unique traditional culture [16]. Therefore, promoting the integration of cultural tourism and developing cultural and creative products with

ethnic characteristics will be an important means for the northwest region to explore the market. Huang Min also affirmed the role of cultural and creative product marketing in the development of the cultural tourism industry and the improvement of the regional economy [17]. However, cultural and creative products are not the only way to enhance the integration and development of cultural tourism. With the development of Internet applications and the gradual bottlenecking of traditional sightseeing markets, to find a breakthrough in the cultural tourism industry, it is essential to pay attention to the joint promotion of online and offline, maximize the role of "5G" in the cultural tourism market, use innovative ways to reduce marketing costs, and improve marketing reach [18]. Zhang Xue, combining the "4P" theory, analyzed and believed that reducing the price of cultural tourism products and industries is a key point to attracting tourists. She also proposed the idea of opening the tourism market to public welfare practitioners free of charge to enhance public influence, which can effectively open up the regional cultural tourism market [19]. Li Ren believed that the innovation of cultural tourism marketing concepts is the internal driving force leading to high-quality development of cultural tourism. Cultural tourism units, enterprises, and governments should explore and innovate, using diverse marketing models to create a new pattern of integrated development of cultural tourism [20].

2.4. Current Situation of Ningxia's Cultural Tourism

Dai Bin, during a speech in Ningxia, said: "Looking at the current tourism economic development trend and regional development opportunities, Ningxia's tourism has reached a critical point of breakthrough and takeoff. I have two overall judgments about the current tourism economic situation: domestically, it is an era of mass tourism based on national consumption; internationally, it is an era of growing global tourism. Mass tourism and global tourism together constitute the strategic background for Ningxia to build an international tourist destination." [18] Since the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), Ningxia's overall situation of tourism reception has continued to improve, with both domestic and foreign tourists visiting Ningxia increasing year by year [21]. Affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic conditions, the national cultural and tourism industry has undergone huge changes, and tourists' requirements for the cultural tourism industry have also changed accordingly [22]. Statistics from the Ningxia Culture and Tourism Department show that compared to 2021, the number of tourists visiting Ningxia in 2022 increased, among which the number of inbound tourists decreased significantly by more than 50%. Factors removed, the number of domestic tourists increased, rising by 7.18 percentage points compared to 2021 [21].

In summary, under the major trend of the "global village," tourists have more diversified choices regarding tourist destinations. Mass tourism, global tourism, and the necessarily developed global tourism represent both opportunities and challenges for Ningxia. How to effectively market and capture tourists' interests to open up the cultural tourism industry market has become an important topic for research. This paper will apply a SWOT Analysis to identify the strengths and weaknesses of Ningxia's cultural tourism market, aiming to provide new avenues for optimizing Ningxia's cultural tourism marketing strategies.

3. SWOT Analysis

3.1. Strengths

Previous research indicates that Ningxia possesses a wealth of natural and cultural heritage resources, such as the mysterious Xi Xia Imperial Tombs, magnificent natural scenery like the vast sandy sea at Zhongwei Shapotou, and the colorful Danxia landform at Guyuan Huoshizhai. Additionally, as an autonomous region for the Hui people, it boasts unique ethnic customs and Yinchuan, known as the "Jiangnan on the Frontier," offers fertile plains. These resources provide Ningxia with unique

advantages for developing global tourism. Particularly, as an ethnic autonomous region, Ningxia's distinct Hui culture—with its architectural style, culinary traditions, and festival activities—holds significant appeal for both domestic and international tourists. Moreover, as an important node on the ancient Silk Road, its historical relics and legendary stories enrich cultural tourism. Government departments have also introduced many favorable policies to support the development of cultural tourism in Ningxia, highlighting the potential for tourism growth.

3.2. Weaknesses

However, the disadvantages of Ningxia's cultural tourism industry are quite evident. Despite the abundance of cultural and tourism resources, there are deficiencies in infrastructure, service quality, brand influence, and tourist capacity. Economic conditions have affected some attractions, leading to inconveniences in transportation, limited accommodation options, and low visibility, which impact tourists' experiences. Furthermore, a shortage of professional talent in Ningxia's cultural tourism industry constrains its rapid development.

3.3. Opportunities

With the rise of mass tourism and global tourism, along with advancements in the "Belt and Road" initiative, Ningxia's cultural tourism industry faces unprecedented development opportunities. Ningxia can leverage its unique geographical location to enhance tourism cooperation with neighboring countries and regions, jointly developing tourism routes and products. The mysterious Xi Xia culture, a unique cultural heritage of Ningxia, could be promoted through cultural and creative products, drawing tourists to gradually uncover the mysteries of Xi Xia culture. As technology progresses, especially with the application of the internet and big data, Ningxia's cultural tourism industry can utilize these technologies to improve marketing effectiveness and service quality, attracting more visitors. For instance, the global popularity of "Black Myth: Wukong" since its release on August 20, 2024, demonstrates how digital tourism can open new avenues for offline tourism.

3.4. Threats

Nevertheless, Ningxia's cultural tourism industry also faces numerous challenges and threats. On the one hand, competition in the domestic and international tourism markets is increasingly fierce, requiring Ningxia to continuously enhance its competitiveness to stand out. On the other hand, changes in the tourism market lead to diversified and personalized tourist demands, necessitating constant innovation in tourism products and services to meet these needs. Additionally, emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic can impact Ningxia's cultural tourism industry. Therefore, Ningxia must remain vigilant and responsive to various challenges and threats.

4. Conclusion

As a brilliant gem in Northwest China, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region boasts exceptional natural scenery and rich cultural heritage. Through SWOT analysis, we clearly see the opportunities and challenges facing Ningxia's cultural tourism market. To further promote the development of Ningxia's cultural tourism industry, this paper proposes several strategies aimed at strengthening infrastructure construction, deepening cultural connotation exploration, enhancing regional cooperation, innovating marketing strategies, and addressing emergencies and risk prevention.

Enhancing infrastructure construction and service improvement is key to elevating tourists' experiences. Ningxia needs continuous investment in transportation, accommodation, and focusing on improving the professional quality of tourism service personnel to build Ningxia's tourism brand

image. Deepening the exploration and innovation of cultural connotations requires Ningxia to delve into its unique cultural heritage and integrate these elements innovatively into tourism products, creating distinctive local tourism brands. Utilizing digital technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) can offer tourists more vivid and interactive experiences.

Strengthening regional cooperation and market expansion is essential for the development of Ningxia's cultural tourism industry. Ningxia should actively establish tourism cooperation mechanisms with neighboring countries and regions, jointly developing cross-regional tourism routes and products to expand into international markets. Leveraging the "Belt and Road" initiative to enhance tourism exchanges and cooperation with countries along the route can increase Ningxia's visibility and influence in the international tourism market.

Innovative marketing strategies and promotion methods are crucial for enhancing Ningxia's tourism reputation and attractiveness. Ningxia should fully utilize modern technological means such as the internet and big data to innovate marketing strategies and improve marketing efficiency. Interacting with tourists through online platforms and social media can boost Ningxia's tourism profile and appeal. Additionally, hosting various tourism festivals can attract visitors to experience Ningxia firsthand.

Addressing emergencies and risk prevention is key to ensuring the sustainable development of Ningxia's cultural tourism industry. Ningxia should establish a comprehensive tourism risk prevention mechanism to timely respond to emergencies like pandemics and strengthen tourism safety supervision to ensure tourists' health and safety, enhancing their confidence in Ningxia's tourism offerings.

Through implementing these strategies, Ningxia can fully leverage its advantages in the cultural tourism market, overcome weaknesses, seize opportunities, and confront threats, propelling the high-quality development of Ningxia's cultural tourism industry and laying a solid foundation for becoming an international tourist destination. In the future, this study will continue to delve deeper into the following aspects: The integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and VR/AR with Ningxia's cultural and tourism marketing; Sustainability research on the development of Ningxia's cultural and tourism industry; The significant role of community services in the external marketing of Ningxia's cultural and tourism market. With the deepening and application of these studies, Ningxia is expected to become a desirable travel destination for tourists worldwide, injecting new vitality into Ningxia's economic and social development.

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