

Research on Online Services of Foreign Archive Cultural Creative Products — Taking the National Archives of UK as an Example

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Abstract: The development and sales of cultural creative products in China's archives are at the initial stage. This article conducts an online survey of foreign cultural creative product online services, taking the National Archives of UK as an example. And it analyzes and studies from three aspects: the types and characteristics of archive cultural creative products, the online cultural creative product architecture settings, and operational rules. Three suggestions are put forward: building branded products based on collections, developing cultural creative products with both aesthetic and practical properties, and paying attention to online service details.

Keywords: Archive Cultural Creative Products; Online Services of Cultural Creative Products; The National Archives of UK

1. Introduction

As the central preservation base for archives, archives have unique advantages in collection resources and cultural resources. They are obligated and capable to develop cultural creative products, and actively respond to social cultural needs. Archive cultural creative products are spiritual consumer products based on physical products. By extracting and transforming historical and cultural information in archives, traditional cultural elements in archives are attached to a certain medium, making the dry and distanced archive content form modern cultural commodities and values that people accept, easily come into contact with, and are willing to obtain. This meets the public's pursuit of and feelings for culture, provides the public with a recognition of culture, and while possessing these cultural elements, one can learn more about the potential archive value of cultural products[1].

Different institutions and experts have different definitions and understandings of cultural creative products. According to the analysis of the characteristic attributes by UNESCO, cultural creative products are consumer products that express creative ideas, symbols, and lifestyles[2]. Liu Jiaxin believes that cultural creative products refer to various cultural products and cultural services developed based on historical cultural resources, using innovative concepts and technical means. It includes consumer goods that convey the meaning of art and culture and generate artistic and cultural educational significance and social educational value, such as handicrafts, replicas, printed matter, etc.; cultural services refer to activities that meet the general public's cultural interests and spiritual needs, including holding exhibitions, public lectures, and characteristic cultural projects[3]. The domestic archive cultural creative industry is just starting, and the archive cultural creative products developed by archives and circulated in the market are still very scarce, and the development and sales of archive cultural creative products are still being explored. In contrast, Western countries started earlier in this area, and The National Archives of UK's online sales and services of archive cultural creative products have already developed quite maturely, which can provide references for China's archives to promote archive cultural creative products online.

2. Types and Features of Cultural Creative Products of the National Archives of UK

The National Archives of the UK sells a wide variety of creative products online, which cover a wealth of cultural elements and show different features. This analysis classifies and features the creative products offered on The National Archives' website, to provide a basic and clear understanding

of their online cultural creative products.

2.1. Types of Creative Products

The National Archives' website has a dedicated online column for creative products, "Bookshop", which has 18 subsections. These sections are not classified by product nature or use, but are mainly based on books, and other products are classified under books according to the book themes. This article does not adopt the fixed classification of The National Archives' website but reorganizes and classifies the creative products in "Bookshop" according to their nature [4].

2.1.1. Book Category Products

First, there are Cold War-related books, under which there are four types: Britain's Cold War Revealed, Cold War Novels, Cold War History, and Spies. Second, there are archive and document-related books, which include three types: Archive and Document Management, Understanding Old Documents, and Reading and Writing History. Third, there are children's books, which have seven types: About Me and My Family, About Past Life, About British Celebrities, About World Wars, Children's Historical Novels, Picture Books, etc. Fourth, there are British history-related books, including nine types: Domesday Book, Medieval and Early, Tudor, 17th Century, Georgian, Victorian Era, 20th Century, Empire, General History, etc. Fifth, there are crime and police-related books, with four types: 18th Century and Earlier, 19th Century, 20th Century, Prisons and Punishments, etc. Sixth, there are family history books, with seven types: Reference Books, Preservation and Display, Tracing Your Ancestors, BMD and Census Records, Legal and Parish Records, Wills and Probate Records, Family History Stories, etc. Seventh, there are historical novels, which are categorized into seven types by chronological order: 15th Century and Earlier, 16th and 17th Centuries, 18th and 19th Centuries, Early 20th Century, First World War, Second World War, Post-War, etc. Eighth, there are Landscape and Identity books, with four types: British Scenery, Folklore, People and Places, From A to B, etc. Ninth, there are London history-related books, with seven types: London Maps, London Underworld, London Buildings, Victorian London, London, London's History, Wartime London, etc. Tenth, there are military history books, also divided by chronological order into seven types: 15th Century and Earlier, 16th and 17th Centuries, 18th and 19th Centuries, First World War, Second World War, Post-1945, Medals and Cap Badges, etc. Eleventh, there are maps, including Military Maps, Historical Maps, City Maps, and First World War Trench Maps. Twelfth, there are women's history-related books, with seven types: Fight for the Vote, Women in War, Women's Work, Notable Women, Royal Women, Novels and Literature, Women's Lives, etc.

2.1.2. Game and Toy Category Products

First, there are children's games and toys. In addition to children's books, there are games and toys developed and sold for children, so the main target group is children. These games and toys inject archival cultural elements into children's educational products. They are not simply combined but developed into different cultural products based on different cultural elements, helping children understand the related culture while playing and participating in activities. Second, there are general games and toys. The general games and toys do not set a specific target group, but considering their content and difficulty level, they are more suitable for younger people who are older than children.

2.1.3. Stationery Category Products

The stationery category includes notebooks, record cards, pencils, postcards, bookmarks, bookshelves, paperweights, pencil sharpeners, magnifying glasses, globes, compasses, etc. For example, the Battle of Britain Pencil, a blue pencil made of tin, decorated with a British fighter aircraft helmet. The pencil is marked with "Battle of Britain" and an outline of a Spitfire; The National Archives Bird Postcards, a collection of postcards featuring various birds found at The National Archives.

2.1.4. Home Furnishing Category Products

Home furnishing products include home decorations, gloves, bags, pins, refrigerator magnets, jewelry boxes, bottle openers, etc. For example, the Queen Victoria Decoration, a scaled-down hanging decoration modeled after Queen Victoria in her coronation robe. The Allotment Gardener Fridge Magnet, a fridge magnet with a strong retro feel, features a well-known allotment gardener poster from World War II. The Chartist Demonstration Poster Tea Towel, a textured tea towel designed around the theme of the working-class movement for political reform in the first half of the 19th century in Britain.

2.1.5. Accessory Category Products

Currently, the jewelry products sold in the "Bookshop" of The National Archives are a series developed around the theme of War in Europe, including badges, brooches, scarves, cufflinks, earrings, etc. For example, the D-Day 75 Pin Badge, featuring the 1944 Normandy landing, commemorates the 75th anniversary of D-Day. The 1778 Silk Scarf, based on designs from The National Archives map series, the image comes from Thomas Yeakell and William Gardner's 1778 map of Sussex.

2.1.6. Replicas

The replicas mainly focus on document copies and replica medals, including document and fax booklets, coins, medals, newspapers, bags, etc. For example, the 1914-15 Star, a medal awarded to those who served in any theatre of war between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915, is a mini replica of the 1914-15 Star received in World War I, affectionately known as the "Pip". The Facsimile Magna Carta, the Magna Carta is a legal charter originally issued in 1215, this replica comes with a scroll with Latin text, some badges and royal seals, and provides an English translation.

2.2. Inspired by our Collection

"Inspired by our collection" is a specialized column of cultural and creative products in the "Bookshop" that draws inspiration from the collections of The National Archives in the UK. This includes branded goods and books, both of which have been presented in the various types of products mentioned above. This column specifically showcases the collection-inspired series separately, with the aim of highlighting the archival creative products designed, developed, and publicly sold by The National Archives. For example, Secrets Of The National Archives, Birth, Marriage And Death Records A Guide for Family Historians, The National Archives Building Tote Bag, The National Archives A5 Notebook, etc.

2.3. Characteristics of Cultural and Creative Products

Each item in the "Inspired by our collection" series embodies one or more elements of archive culture, which are conveyed through different forms in the archival creative products. The National Archives of the UK incorporates pure text archival elements, picture archival elements, and physical archival elements into different types of creative products, forming creative products that can meet a variety of work or life needs. This makes the combination of archival elements and creative products more intimate and natural, promoting the sale of creative products while also pushing the spread of archival culture.

2.3.1. Pure Text Archival Elements

Textual content such as the Magna Carta and prime minister's speeches, i.e., pure text archival elements, can directly form printed materials and also provide inspiration for the creation of related thematic literary works. For example, the D-Day file set made from previously unpublished files to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landing is a reuse of pure text archival elements.

2.3.2. Picture Archival Elements

Photographs, maps, icons, and other picture archival elements can be applied to the design of various daily necessities and participate in online exhibitions. For example, notepads made with images from the "Bob Saves" Treasure Island poster created for the national savings campaign in 1946, refrigerator magnets featuring the Great Suffrage Demonstration poster, bookmarks made with mini-portraits of famous British writers, etc., are all reuses of picture archival elements.

2.3.3. Physical Archival Elements

Physical archival elements generally refer to the physical form of archives that can be applied to the development of archival culture products, as well as physical entities related to archival culture. For example, a backpack designed with the Crosby bookcase from The National Archives' image library, a replica pin inspired by the wedding of Victoria and Albert with typical Victorian era style, and the Armistice Poppy badge, etc.

3. The Online Operation of The National Archives UK's Cultural and Creative Products

The cultural and creative products of The National Archives UK are centralized through the

"Bookshop," and therefore, the following mainly analyzes the structure and operation of the "Bookshop."

3.1. The Network Structure of the Bookshop

As mentioned earlier, the cultural and creative products of The National Archives UK are categorized, but the "Bookshop" does not set up its network structure based on the types of creative products. Instead, it customizes themes to group different types of products together for a thematic overview, helping customers promptly find and select creative products they are interested in. Table 1 shows the settings for the primary and secondary categories in the "Bookshop."

Table 1: Structure of the "Bookshop"

Primary Category	Secondary Category				
Cold War	Exhibition Shop	Cold War Books			
Archives and Documents	Archive and Document Management	Understanding Old Documents	Reading and Writing History		
Discounts and Offers	Children's Books	Diaries and Calendars	Family History Books	Gifts and Home Goods	History Books
	Popular History Books	Sport History Books	Transport Related Books	Military History Books	Spy Novels
Children's Books	Me and My Family	Life in the Past	Famous Britons	World Wars	
	Children's Historical Novels	Games & Activities	Picture Books	Plush Toys	
British History	Domesday	Medieval and Early	Tudor	17th Century	Georgian
	Victorian	20th Century	Empire	General History	
Crime and Policing	18th Century and Earlier	19th Century	20th Century	Prison & Punishment	
Family History	Reference Books	Storage & Display	Coupon	Tracing Ancestors	BMD and Census
	Law and Parish Records	Photos	Wills and Probate Records	Family History Stories	
Gifts and Stationery	Stationery	Games Puzzles Models	Home Goods	Diaries and Calendars	Jewelry
Historical Fiction	15th Century and Earlier	16th and 17th Centuries	18th and 19th Centuries	Early 20th Century	
	First World War	Second World War	Post-war		
Inspired by our Collection	Branded Goods	Books			
Landscape and Identity	British Landscape	Folklore	People and Places	From a to b	
History of London	London Maps	London Underworld	London Buildings	Victorian London	
	London	London History	Wartime London		
Military History	15th Century and Earlier	16th and 17th Centuries	18th and 19th Centuries	First World War	Two World Wars
	Second World War	Post 1945	Medals and Cap Badges		
Replica Documents and Medals	Facsimile Booklets and Documents	Coins	Medals	Newspapers	Bags
Map Room	Military Maps	Historical Maps	Map Replicas	City Maps	Trench Maps of WWI
Women's History	Suffrage	Women in War	Women's Work	Outstanding Women	
	Royal Women	Fiction & Literature	Women's Life		

3.2. Bookshop Operations

The operation of the National Archives UK "Bookshop" includes four aspects: pricing, delivery, after-sales, security and privacy protection.

3.2.1. Pricing

Considering the classification of the National Archives UK's online cultural and creative products, different product types in the "Bookshop" have different prices. There are many types of book products, and the price range is the largest. Among them, the endings of various product prices are mainly 0.5 pounds and 0.99 pounds. Based on the lowest and highest selling prices of various cultural and creative goods, the price standards of archival cultural goods not only include different prices of goods, but also include the different choice degrees of different levels of users. The lowest price for the entire National Archives UK online sale is 1 pound, and the highest price is 540 pounds. The lowest prices of all types of products are within the range that the general public can afford without pressure.

3.2.2. Delivery

From the delivery policy of the National Archives UK, it can be seen that the postage cost has a very detailed division standard: within the UK, a uniform postage of 3.50 pounds per order, or free shipping for orders over 25.00 pounds; within the European Union, the first book costs 4.00 pounds, and each subsequent book in the same batch costs 2.50 pounds; in other parts of the world, the cost of the first book is 6.00 pounds, and the cost of each subsequent book in the same batch is 4.00 pounds. Each order has different delivery time rules according to the region, and orders for delivery in the UK are usually shipped within 2 to 3 working days and delivered within 2 to 5 working days; for European addresses, it usually takes 7 to 14 days after shipment, and 10 to 20 days to other parts of the world. It can be seen that compared to the express delivery system in China, the National Archives UK has a clear delivery system, and there are fewer choices for product delivery companies and costs.[5]

3.2.3. After-sales

The after-sales policy of the National Archives UK is relatively simple, and currently only includes regulations related to returns. The National Archives UK promises that if the item does not meet customer expectations, customers can return unwanted items in their original state (packaging not opened) within 30 days of receipt. The Archives not only provides a full refund, but also bears the return postage (the delivery postage of the order is not refunded), but free postage is only available within the UK, and customers are responsible for any postage costs outside the UK. In addition, for situations where the product is incorrect or sent in error, the National Archives UK will of course refund the postage. From the perspective of the National Archives UK's after-sales policy, mainly the return policy, the National Archives UK's return policy is quite lenient, giving consumers as long as a month to judge the product value and make choices, and even provides free returns unrelated to product issues. However, there are gaps in online consultation and exchanges, which is a problem worth paying attention to in the online services of our archives' cultural and creative products.

3.2.4. Security and Privacy Protection

The National Archives UK pays great attention to the technical and organizational security of all information it holds. All employees will receive training on how to handle personal data when they join and must participate in annual refresher courses; it uses different levels of encryption to protect your information, ensuring that any third party has an obligation to protect all personal information processed on its behalf. In the privacy statement issued by the National Archives UK, not only the nature, location, services, and activities of the National Archives are elaborated, but also the legal basis for the Archives to process personal information is demonstrated, and 14 situations that may process user information are listed, including the purpose of processing information, the content of information, and the legal basis for the National Archives to use information, etc. For website visits, online shopping, etc., the SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) WorldPay service is used to ensure the safety of user information and transactions. It can be seen that the privacy regulations of the National Archives UK all comply with legal regulations. While improving the level of user service, they can also better improve the quality of cultural and creative products.

4. Inspiration

Through the investigation of the structure, creative product types, and online operation rules of the "Bookshop" on the National Archives UK website, and the detailed analysis of the "Bookshop", we can draw inspirations from the online services of the National Archives UK's creative products for China.

4.1. Building Brand Products Based on Unique Collection Resources

The first element to attract the public and customers for cultural and creative products, which are named for creativity, is inevitably the uniqueness of the products. The National Archives UK designs a series of products from archival compilation products to accessories and stationery based on the rich collections of the museum. Whether they are replicas or derivative products, they show a distinct collection style and characteristics to the public. Not only does it introduce and present the collections of the National Archives, but it also reflects the strong British history and culture. China, with its vast territory and rich cultural layers, all 31 provincial archives and the First and Second Historical Archives have their own unique collections. Therefore, the development of archival creative products should be based on the unique collections of the archives, fully respecting history, culture, and archives, exploring the historical and cultural characteristics and collection characteristics of the archives' location, taking the collection archives as the prototype and basis for the development of creative products, integrating the original appearance, charm, and style of the archives into creative products, and striving to restore the original state of history and culture recorded by the archives to the public in a true and vivid form[6].

4.2. Close to Life, Developing Practical and Diverse Creative Products

Art comes from life and returns to life. The development of creative products by archives is not only in the design and appearance of the product, but also needs to consider the practical function of the product, according to the different characteristics of different customers, such as age, knowledge level, needs, etc., to meet the diverse and personalized needs of consumers, and create creative products suitable for consumers[7]. Although the National Archives UK's online shopping is mainly books, it also places great emphasis on lifestyle products. Jigsaw toys, water cups, home decorations, scarves, pencils, and many other products are the best interpretation and validation of this. By developing more practical creative products such as bookmarks, paperweights, and desk calendars that are close to the lives of the masses, not only can the sales range of archive creative products be expanded, but it also helps to bring archives and culture into the lives of the public, and promotes education invisibly.

4.3. Paying Attention to Details and Providing a Better Online Shopping Experience

The design and development of archival creative products is the premise and basis for all promotion of archival creative products, while the details of online services are the biggest bonus for the sale of archival creative products. The detailed settings for the online service of creative products on the National Archives UK website are also one of the secrets to the successful sale of the National Archives UK's creative products. For example, using elegant language to vividly describe the product; each product shows reviews from other customers or employees; when browsing a product, related products are recommended; wish lists are set up, and each user can create and share their own wish list with friends, etc. Given the maturity of various online shopping platforms in China, archives can carry out online marketing and after-sales service for creative products through existing third-party network platforms (such as Tmall, JD), and directly link to third-party platform websites through the official website's mall section. The rest of the work is done through the third-party website. This avoids the cumbersome operations of designing, building, operating, and managing an online system, reduces operating costs, ensures consumer safety and convenient logistics management, and can also reduce the consumer's adaptation period and trial time, easily winning users[8]. In this way, many online service details such as user reviews and exchanges, after-sales of products, etc., can be realized on third-party platforms, allowing time and energy to be concentrated on the development and quality assurance of creative products, providing more, better, and more distinctive archival creative products for society.

5. Conclusion

The domestic archives cultural and creative industry, which is still in the initial stage, has obvious disadvantages, and the products circulating in the market are sparse and the sales channels need to be explored. The National Archives of the UK has a relatively mature development in both the types and characteristics of cultural and creative products, as well as the architecture setting and operation rules of online cultural and creative products, which is of important reference significance for the online promotion of cultural and creative archives in China. It's important to strive to integrate the original appearance, charm and style of archives into cultural and creative products, build brand products on the

basis of characteristic collection resources, and develop diversified cultural and creative products close to life and practical use, and pay attention to online service details.

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