

# Analysis of the durability characteristic and application of cultural products with the example of the Disney Company

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**Abstract:** *Cultural products have the characteristic of durability, a long survival cycle and a wide range of audience groups compared with other products, which profoundly affects the market competitiveness and sustainable development of cultural enterprises. In order to deeply understand the causes of the durability of cultural products, this paper analyses the intrinsic value of cultural products, industrial characteristics, dissemination characteristics, technical means and other perspectives, and researches and analyses the development and initiatives of the Disney Company, which has a century-long cultural history, so as to put forward relevant opinions for cultural enterprises to make full use of the characteristic of the durability of cultural products.*

**Keywords:** *Cultural product; Business administration; Cultural enterprise; Disney*

## 1. Introduction

Cultural products are consumer goods that disseminate ideas, symbols and lifestyles; they are the various types of cultural vehicles and forms of cultural services used to satisfy people's needs." As a new industry in the 21st century, cultural industry can spread and improve the image of the country through the output of cultural products, in addition, it can create high added value and play a positive role in promoting the development of the economy, and in recent years, the cultural industry has gradually become a new growth point for economic development."<sup>[1]</sup> It is very important to grasp the difference between cultural products and products of other industries, and to make reasonable deployment of resources and strategy formulation.

## 2. Analysis of the causes of the durability of cultural products

### 2.1. Comparison of Differences

With the characteristic of durability, cultural products are able to exist in the market for a longer period of time, and even some classic cultural works are still praised by people after hundreds of years. Most of the products in daily life are produced to meet people's actual needs, such as lunch boxes, rolling papers and so on, which have more distinctive features of practicality and simplicity, and most of them will lose their value after one or more times of use, and even some of the "non-essentials", i.e., luxuries, will be "worn out" due to wear and tear in the process of prolonged use, transfer and collection.

And the consumption of cultural products belongs to appreciative consumption, people will realise the value identity in cultural products. Although the material carriers or modes of service of many cultural products in history have disappeared, their social significance has been sublimated, and they have had different ranges and depths of influence on people at the level of ideological values. The significance of an excellent literary work or film or television drama points to the process of shifting from a single material capital to immaterial capital, i.e. symbolic capital, which is constituted by the combined effects of symbols, information and various media elements.<sup>[2]</sup> Wear and tear is inevitable in the use of any physical product, and many cultural products also require a material carrier, but wear and tear of the media carrier or the passage of time will not affect the actual value of the cultural product.

On the other hand, cultural products usually have a wide audience spanning different age, gender, cultural background and geographical factors. In contrast, most commercial or technical products have

a relatively narrow audience and tend to appeal only to specific groups or markets.

## **2.2. Exploring the causes**

Combined with the comparative analysis of differences, the enduring characteristic of cultural products are that they have a long life cycle and a wide range of audience groups, and that the value and significance of cultural products will continue to increase or change with the passage of time. The following is an exploration of the reasons for this characteristic of cultural products:

### **2.2.1. Industrial Characteristics**

In the process of designing cultural products, enterprises have to take into account the highly creative and personalised characteristics that cultural products should have, and it often takes a long time of planning and production to bring the programme to the market. At the same time, the production process of cultural products also requires a high level of technical and human resources support, a longer production cycle and higher production costs, so such production characteristics also determine that cultural products must have a high value-added and brand influence so that they can be attached to the consumer market for a longer period of time.

The ecosystem of cultural industries are also one of the key reasons for the persistent character of cultural products. The cultural industry encompasses a wide range of fields such as film and television, music, literature and art, which are intertwined and interpenetrating, forming a complex ecosystem. Cultural products are constantly exchanged, interacted and sublimated in this ecosystem, forming a richer and deeper cultural connotation. The existence of this ecosystem allows cultural products to innovate and evolve, creating enduring characteristic.

### **2.2.2. Intrinsic value**

Cultural products have the dual attributes of ideology and commodity. On the one hand, cultural products, like other products, are subject to the constraints of history, time and technology in their production, while at the same time they can bring certain economic benefits. On the other hand, cultural products have social and cultural values that distinguish them from other products, and they also have the function of use, which satisfies the contemporary consumers' pursuit of material and spiritual dimensions.<sup>[3]</sup>

From the point of view of the intrinsic value and cultural significance of cultural products themselves, cultural products usually have certain aesthetic, cultural, historical and ideological connotations.<sup>[4]</sup> These intrinsic values and cultural significance can be recognised and valued by more people over time, thus enabling the influence and value of cultural products to be further enhanced. The existence of such intrinsic value and cultural significance allows cultural products to transcend the limits of time and space and to endure. In contrast, the value attributes of other products mainly focus on economic and practical aspects, and the value of these products is often related to market demand and the context of the times, so their market life cycle is relatively short.

### **2.2.3. Cultural heritage and continuity**

Often carrying historical, cultural and social values, classic cultural products have a high degree of cultural inheritance. These products have been deeply rooted in people's minds through long-term cultural inheritance and have become classics in people's minds. These products have been deeply rooted in people's hearts and become classics through long-term cultural inheritance. At the same time, they also tend to have high emotional value and ideological connotation, which can touch people's deep emotional needs, trigger emotional resonance, and influence people's thoughts and behaviour. For example, Shakespeare's dramatic works, Dante's Divine Comedy, and the poems of Li Bai and Du Fu are some of the literary classics that have been passed down through the centuries and have become representative of global culture. These works not only have high artistic value, but also can reflect the values and cultural atmosphere of the times and become an important window for people to understand history and culture. At the same time, they convey a profound philosophy of life and social significance, and can trigger people's thoughts and feelings about life, love, friendship and other aspects. However, most commercial or technological products tend to lack such classical and cultural values, and are more concerned with market demands and commercial interests.

### **2.2.4. Reproducible dissemination**

Novels, films, TV dramas and other cultural products can be adapted, translated into different language versions and distributed to a wider language market to attract audiences in different language

circles. This helps enterprises to open up the international market and reduce the risk of relying on a single market. The story, characters, plot and other elements can be extended and derived through adaptations, producing different forms of derivative works such as films, TV series, animations and games. These derivative works can reach different audience groups and expand the product's market influence and popularity.

Excellent cultural products and the modes of programming and characterisation techniques in them also have a certain degree of replicability. This can promote the progress of the cultural industry as a whole and indirectly expand the influence of the pioneer cultural products. So, overall, the greater replicability of cultural products in the process of dissemination provides the opportunity for cultural enterprises to attach themselves more permanently to the market.

### ***2.2.5. Modern media technologies***

Modern media technologies have made it possible to disseminate and promote cultural products more widely, as well as to make them more easily available and accessible. For example, classic films, literary works and musical compositions can be disseminated to all parts of the globe through the Internet, digital media and other channels, enabling more people to have access to and appreciate these cultural products. Modern media technologies such as 4K restoration and 3D rendering have also made more productions highly watchable and enjoyable.

## **3. Exploration of Disney's Strategy**

The Walt Disney Company was founded in 1923. In the past hundred years, through continuous acquisitions, mergers and investments, the Disney Group has expanded its market share and become one of the world's most successful entertainment and media conglomerates with a multifaceted portfolio of films, animation, games, theme parks and offline consumer products. In addition to producing and distributing films, Disney has a number of well-known brands and cultural IPs under its umbrella, such as Marvel, Star Wars, and The Simpsons, which have brought the company high revenues and a wide range of influence. Meanwhile, the Disney theme parks and resorts located around the world have laid the foundation for Disney to build a global radiation network.

The many accomplishments of Disney's century-long development have demonstrated the great development potential of cultural enterprises and the enduring characteristic of cultural products. As a typical cultural enterprise, Disney's successful experience is worthy of reference and learning by other cultural enterprises.

### ***3.1. The continuing influence of classic animation***

Since the release of its first animated film, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, in 1937, Disney has been one of the world's most famous animation production companies. Many of the animated films created by Disney since then have become classics, such as The Little Mermaid, The Lion King, and Cinderella. Not only were these films a huge success at the time, but in the decades that followed, these classic films were remade several times or adapted into plays, dance dramas, etc., and are still loved by audiences. Its iconic "Mickey Mouse" character and other well-known animated characters have become one of the world's most popular and recognisable brands. Such high brand awareness gives Disney a huge advantage over the competition in the market and enables the company to attract and retain more consumers.

### ***3.2. Infusion of values and social responsibility***

The brand image of the Disney Company has undergone some changes at different times and stages, for example, in the 1920s-1940s, when the Disney Company was first established, its brand image was mainly represented by Mickey Mouse, with an emphasis on childishness and family friendliness. During this phase, the Disney Company conveyed its brand image to the audience mainly through animated films and cartoons. The 1990s-2000s, during which Disney released a series of classic animated films, such as The Lion King and Beauty and the Beast, which emphasised the values of courage, justice and love, as well as more advanced animation production techniques and musical elements, thus further consolidating Disney's brand image. From the 2010s to the present, Disney has further expanded its reach and brand presence by acquiring brands and intellectual property such as Marvel. Also, Disney has begun to focus on introducing more diverse and inclusive productions and

services, such as Frozen and Black Panther, thus further enhancing the positive and culturally impactful nature of its brand image.

But no matter how it changes it always emphasises positive values such as family, friendship, courage and justice, and focuses on innovation and improvement to suit the needs of viewers of different age groups and cultural backgrounds. This positive brand image and the spirit of continuous innovation have enabled The Walt Disney Company to maintain its longstanding leadership position in the entertainment industry and to become an important cultural symbol and shared memory of people's childhood and upbringing.

Furthermore, Disney's products and services tend to focus on cultural and social responsibility as well, showcasing a variety of cultures and backgrounds in its films and television programmes, and promoting tolerance and respect for different faiths and genders. They also have a range of policies and programmes in place to ensure that both employees and partners are treated fairly and equally, and this sense of social responsibility further enhances the positive brand image.

The key value of cultural products is to bring the right spiritual guidance to consumers, and it can be said that Disney has implemented this into their cultural services and internal management, which has made their products highly praised and gained wide influence in the society.

### ***3.3. Reproduction of IP inside the theme park***

Based on the stories and characters of classic IPs, Disney designs rides and attractions at theme parks around the world to take guests into the world of those stories and characters. In the story of Winnie the Pooh, for example, Hundred Acre Wood is the home of Pooh and his friends, and Disney theme parks have built a Hundred Acre Wood attraction that allows visitors to experience the world of this classic IP first-hand. We can see a lot of actors dressed as classic animated characters around these attractions. The lively performances of the actors let visitors really feel the charm of the classic animated characters.

We can also find various themed merchandise, such as toys, clothes and tableware, launched by the Disney Company in theme parks and resorts or on the official website, so that tourists can purchase and collect items related to the classic IP. Not only do these items provide commemorative value to visitors, but they also generate revenue and branding for Disney.

### ***3.4. Continued product innovation***

As a globally recognised entertainment brand, Disney has continued to innovate in its cultural offerings, launching new products and services to meet the needs of different demographics.

In terms of storytelling, Disney has introduced new works by constantly innovating and adapting classic stories. Disney's film Frozen, released in 2013, is a very successful example. Adapted from Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale but with elements more in tune with modern audience tastes, the film explores issues of female self-identity and self-worth through the story of the relationship between two sisters, which resonates strongly with the audience. Not only was the film a huge success at the box office, but it also generated huge commercial profits for Disney and drove continued innovation in Disney's cultural offerings.

On the technical front, the interactive games in the Disneyland are a very successful technological innovation. Visitors can participate in the games through handheld devices and interact with the scenes and characters in the park, which enhances their sense of participation and experience. It has also introduced new technologies such as holographic projection technology and virtual reality technology, which have provided strong support for the innovation and upgrading of its cultural products.

With regard to cross-border co-operation, Disney has partnered with companies in various fields to launch new cultural products. Working with trendy brand Vans, Disney has launched a series of Disney cartoon patterned shoes and apparel, which has attracted the attention of many young consumers. Disney also launched original series such as Raiders of the Lost Ark on Apple TV+ with Apple, expanding Disney's reach and visibility in the entertainment industry.

The continued innovation of Disney's cultural products is due to its keen insight into the market and its precise grasp of the needs of its audience. Disney continues to innovate and improve its products, expanding the audience of its products and meeting the needs of different consumers, so that its cultural products have been widely recognised and acclaimed in the market, and also revitalised many

outstanding classic works of art, lengthening the survival cycle in the market.

#### 4. Observations and recommendations

Both the compulsion of the era of globalisation and its own economic, political and cultural significance in the era of globalisation have made it inevitable for the cultural industries to be integrated into the wave of the market economy.<sup>[5]</sup> Nowadays, cultural products have become an important part of the cultural industry, and the cultural industry has become one of the important pillars of economic growth. Therefore proper management of the product by the cultural enterprise is necessary and important.

Combined with the case study of the Disney Company, cultural enterprises should pay attention to the excavation and presentation of culture in the process of creation and production, and constantly improve the quality of products in terms of artistry, culture, history and ideology, so that the products can be enduring. For the promotion and dissemination of cultural products, a variety of methods and channels, such as exhibitions, performances, publications, digital media, etc., should be adopted to widely disseminate and promote the products, or theme parks or resorts similar to Disneyland should be set up to provide an immersive environment for experiencing the cultural products, so as to enable more people to have access to and learn about the products. The full integration and utilisation of own IP resources will also inject new vitality into the development of the enterprise.

On the basis of inheriting and developing excellent culture, enterprises should also focus on innovation. During the process of product development, new cultural products are developed and new cultural services are introduced by combining modern aesthetics and consumer needs with innovative design elements. Enterprises should encourage their employees to improve their own design and innovation capabilities. It is important to continuously innovate products to adapt to market changes and consumer needs. With the development of digital technology, cultural enterprises can also make use of digital technology to inject new elements and vitality into their products, as well as to open up new markets.

Business administrators also need to develop a sound cultural planning programme and brand marketing strategy, on the one hand, to help cultural enterprises to establish their own cultural identity, so that consumers can deeply understand and appreciate the cultural values represented by their products. On the other hand, it can help cultural enterprises establish their brand image in the market and enhance the popularity and recognition of their products. While pursuing economic benefits, administrators should also be clear about their social responsibilities. The cultural products they produce need to be based on the right values. Such values should also be embedded in the corporate culture and other services they provide. In addition, in order to improve the social image of the enterprise, administrators can also actively participate in public service projects.

#### 5. Conclusions

For cultural enterprises, focusing on the enhancement of the intrinsic value and cultural significance of their products, maintaining a sense of innovation and broadening their horizons, as well as integrating with social development and audience needs, are all important means of prolonging the life cycle of cultural products and broadening the scope of audience groups. Only by firmly grasping the enduring characteristic of cultural products and continuously continuing their development vigour can cultural enterprises succeed in the market and become the best in the cultural industry.

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