

# Urban Zoo Visual Identity Design and Creative Product Development Research — Case Study of Wuxi Zoo

Hua,Weiying

Philippine Christian University

**Abstract:** This article elaborates on the background of urban zoos relying on urban productivity, the current status of cultural heritage, points out the problems in cultural promotion that some attractions currently face, discusses the importance of modern design in cultural heritage, and highlights considerations for developing cultural and creative products. It outlines the development steps and showcases design cases of the zoo's series of IP products.

The tourism industry centered around culture, along with its associated peripheral industries, can promote regional economic development. Developing traditional cultural resources into cultural products in various regions has brought about economic benefits and has become a new research topic. Taking local IP culture as the backdrop, using Wuxi Zoo's cultural products as an example, this study analyzes the current status and issues of cultural and creative products from practical, creative, cultural, historical, and service perspectives, providing insights for its continued development.

**Keywords:** Zoo; Cultural and creative; Product design

DOI: 10.62639/sspjnss02.20240101

The cultural and creative industry is one of China's emerging industries, focusing on the re-creation of cultural resources by creative talents using high-tech methods within specific cultural contexts, thereby generating high-added-value products and wealth. Wuxi Zoo, which has been in operation for 67 years, has recognized the deficiency in its brand IP. Faced with the impact of domestic and international theme parks possessing strong IPs, the cultural output of the zoo has been positively influenced. Although the long-established scenic spot started relatively late in the field of cultural creativity, summarizing its development experience plays a pivotal role in enhancing cultural industries for the future.

## 1. The Current Status of Wuxi Zoo's Creative Animal IP

Starting from 2018, we began developing the IP brand using the local dialect to describe the adorable brown bear, which resonates with the local tourist preferences and serves as the initial design prototype.

### (1) The analysis of tourism resource potential

During the 2021 National Day holiday, Wuxi's Binhu District, leveraging its urban competitiveness, attracted 1.4438 million tourists and achieved a tourism revenue of 1.726 billion RMB. The recovery rates were 69.2% and 60.4%, respectively, when compared to the same period in 2019. Wuxi has consistently made it onto the list of emerging first-tier cities three times, indicating a promising outlook for the future.

---

(Manuscript NO.: JINSS-24-1-6001)

### About the Author

Hua,Weiying ( 1987-03), female, Han nationality, Native place: Wuxi City, Jiangsu Province Born: Wuxi City, Jiangsu Province, PhD, research direction : Art design.

## **(2) The analysis of Wuxi, a city with respect to its economic and cultural heritage**

### **1) The current status of the development of zoos in urban areas**

As China continues to develop, people are increasingly seeking closeness to nature, leading to a growing demand for urban zoos. Reforms will address development obstacles, and in the future, urban zoos will have legal and policy support, presenting significant opportunities.

### **2) Investigate the tourist population situation**

Wuxi Zoo primarily attracts individual tourists, with families and couples comprising the majority of visitors. Family tourists account for 85% of the total, while couples and young adults make up the remaining 15%. Group tours mainly consist of family outings during the spring and autumn seasons, with an annual average of approximately 100,000 visitors. In 2022, the zoo generated a revenue of 87 million yuan, with ticket sales contributing 70% of the revenue, while secondary spending accounted for only 20%. Revenue from cultural and creative products was relatively low, constituting 10% of the total revenue. Despite the young age demographic of visitors and their relatively lower spending power.

## **2. The Current Issues with Design and Cultural and Creative Products are as Follows**

2.1 The current cultural and creative products are limited in variety and are still in the initial stage, primarily limited to product sales. The single and outdated format calls for the development of new cultural export methods.

2.2 When discussing the development of creative products for urban zoos based on consumer culture and typical cultural characteristics, targeting middle to high-income groups, it is essential to consider the purchasing power of the target audience. Currently, Wuxi's economic strength has significantly increased. However, customers still have reservations about high-priced creative products, and the cultural soft power needs enhancement. Since 2018, we have conducted a series of tests regarding visitor purchasing power, and the results indicate that most visitors are in the initial stages of purchasing behavior. The majority of them focus on browsing, with only a small portion willing to purchase lower-priced wholesale goods at the trading markets.

Considering that the primary audience for zoos is families with children, in the development of IP cultural and creative products, collaborations such as the "Bear Cub Building Blocks" and commemorative coin sales have performed the best, with prices ranging from 30 to 40 yuan. This outcome emphasizes the need to cultivate consumers' appreciation for cultural products and improve their consumption preferences and artistic appreciation levels. This requires collaborative efforts from schools, society, and families to gradually enhance this aspect.

2.3 The cultural and creative brand has a low brand effect.

Local attractions, especially zoos, face challenges in attracting visitors. Successful attractions need to cleverly combine cultural and creative products with appeal to enhance brand value and become a trendsetter. Cultural and creative brands should possess cultural significance, unique spaces, and continually refresh their products to meet the cultural experiential needs of adult visitors while creating cherished childhood memories.

## **3. Wuxi Zoo Scenic Area Visual Identity Design and Creative Product Development Case Study**

Cultural tourism IP development requires thematic, iconic, narrative, interactive, symbolic, and innovative elements. Tailoring the creation of local cultural symbols to the specific context promotes the growth of cultural

tourism project IPs.

### **(1) Design style positioning**

Modern urban zoos not only provide entertainment for people but also shoulder responsibilities in endangered animal conservation, science education, and research. Therefore, zoos need to enhance their public communication skills and expand their social connections and resources. Visual language conveys the vision and promotes communication, as demonstrated by the four brown bear images, which use a primarily brown color scheme complemented by bright yellow-green accents. The overall design features smooth and balanced lines, imbued with a sense of fun. The branding system has also been carefully crafted, including signage for safari vehicles and dining establishments.

### **(2) The derivative of park Visual Identity design - the use of signage design**

Taking the tour bus facilities as an example, the designers considered the lack of dedicated roadways within the scenic area. Therefore, the signage at the transportation stations was kept extremely simple. The main color of the station signs remains in the gray spectrum, with the addition of two adorable bear ears.

## **4. The Creation and Utilization of the Wuxi Zoo's IP Character to Expand Sales**

In the Axiom Park, there is a Honey Castle, a themed complex designed exclusively for members of the 'Axiom' family. Inspired by honey, the roof features friendly bee designs. This eye-catching castle combines commerce, dining, and entertainment, specializing in selling food, beverages, and cultural and creative products, including merchandise related to the Bear Family IP, animal figurines, and 'Axiom' co-branded ice cream, among others. The Honey Castle is the most popular cultural and creative shop within the zoo, offering a wide range of products to meet visitors' shopping needs, including stationery, home goods, handicrafts, clothing, and more.

## **5. Self-media Operation Embarking Towards the Future**

The current realm of IP creative and cultural development is no longer a matter of simple decision-making. It encompasses multiple facets of corporate and project management, including marketing models, corporate culture, consumer culture, brand strategy, resource integration, decision-making processes, and product development. Furthermore, it involves the in-depth application of internet, digital technology, and concepts, operating as a comprehensive system managed through a platform-based approach.<sup>[1]</sup>

Multichannel promotion is popular, and visual symbols convey feelings intuitively. Online emojis have become the mainstream of non-textual communication, compensating for the lack of body language. However, the excessive use of emojis can hinder genuine communication. Zoo-themed WeChat emojis are highly anticipated, representing the trend. Visual culture changes meet the new demands of the public.

## **6. The Development and Prospects of Visual Identity Design and Cultural and Creative Product Development**

In the future of the IP cultural and creative industry, the focus should not be limited to craftsmanship products, but rather should channel design thinking into meaningful philanthropic domains. For instance, introducing exclusive zoo-themed creative products, such as organic fertilizer made from animal waste, and extending the 'Turning Waste into Treasure' Visual Identity Design project. This spiritually and emotionally driven design will serve as a powerful driver for corporate innovation, leading to the sustainable development of the economy and

enhancing the philanthropic brand influence of zoos. In the future, IP culture and creativity will become a source of positive spiritual wealth for society.

## **7. Conclusion**

Taking Wuxi Zoo as the research subject, we combined zoo IP with cultural and creative products and analyzed various aspects including the city's competitive strength, the zoo's positioning, and product culture development. We proposed leveraging the unique attributes of the animals to develop the IP, enhancing distinctiveness, attracting visitors, and improving brand competitiveness. Additionally, we suggested using both online and offline operations to increase revenue while simultaneously implementing methods to protect wildlife and natural resources. This research provides theoretical support for future IP development.

## **References**

- [1] The Innovation and Leadership of IP Cultural and Creative Products. [M/OL]. [https://www.sohu.com/a/467345920\\_120793838](https://www.sohu.com/a/467345920_120793838), 2021-05-19 16:54.