

Research on Promotion Strategies and Brand Innovation of Diabolo Sports in the New Media Environment

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Abstract: *Diabolo Sport is one of the first groups of national intangible cultural heritage items in China, and it is rich in culture and fitness. With the changes in society during the new media era, some new problems have also arisen, such as an aging inheritor group, fragmentation of communication content, unbalanced regional development and a lack of brand building. According to the framework of "integration of multiple scenarios - new media empowerment - brand value co-creation", this paper will systematically analyze the current promotion conditions and main problems of Diabolo Sport in the new media era, propose some targeted promotional strategies, and put forward a brand innovation plan. To solve the problems of inheritance and lack of added value mentioned above in this paper, a data-driven collaborative development model with resources from all sides should be built to create a new model for traditional sports.*

Keywords: *New Media Environment, Diabolo Sport, Promotion Strategies, Brand Innovation*

1. Introduction

Diabolo Sport is an old Chinese folk art that combines entertainment, exercise and art in one, and in 2006 it was added to the national list of intangible cultural heritage. It has a large number of participants and many types of consumers, so it is a very popular product. Diabolo sports have been given some attention under the policies for the protection of intangible cultural heritage.

With the development of information technology, many new media have gradually emerged and are now widely used to spread information and promote culture and commerce in the modern era. With the appearance of new media forms, such as short-video platforms, social media and live-streaming e-commerce, the spread and experience of traditional culture by the public have changed significantly. Given the above circumstances, how to use new media to spread the inheritance and development of Diabolo sports, and how to build a Diabolo cultural brand with modern characteristics and market competitiveness, are now urgent problems that need to be addressed. At present, there are still problems with the spread of Diabolo sports on new media platforms, such as content uniformity, a lack of audience and insufficient interaction. Brand construction is still at the beginning of the "having activities but no brand" stage, and it will not be continuously advanced.

According to the framework of "integration of multiple scenarios - new media empowerment - brand value co-creation", this paper will analyze the current promotion situation and problems, explore promotion strategies, build a brand innovation plan, and promote the transformation and upgrading of Diabolo sport.

2. Analysis of the Current Promotion Status of Diabolo Sport in the New Media Environment

2.1 The Pattern of New Media Communication Platforms for Diabolo Sport

At present, the new media dissemination of the Diabolo sport is mainly carried out through short-video platforms, social media and professional sports websites. Douyin and Kuaishou are the top two short-video platforms in China that have posted many videos on skills and how-to guides. In terms of the types of short-video content, skill demonstrations account for the highest proportion at 45%, and their main features are the presentation of fine skills and fancy movements; the communication effect is to achieve high view counts and high like counts. Instructional tutorials make up 25% of the content; they

introduce basic knowledge and advanced techniques, have achieved medium viewership, and have a relatively high number of collections. Competition and performance account for 20 per cent, and among them, event recordings and team performances have gained some attention. Fun challenge accounts for 10%, has creative play styles and challenge activities, and is popular among young people.

Many platforms have started spreading the news of Diabolo sports on social media. WeChat Official Accounts are used to spread news, culture and event information for community interaction; Weibo is mainly for trending topics and popular places; Xiaohongshu is used to showcase the lifestyle qualities of dribbling sports and attract urban white-collar workers; professional sports platforms have set up special columns to offer teaching and event information, but their influence is relatively small.

2.2 Audience Characteristics of Diabolo Sport Dissemination via New Media

Based on the audience analysis, the groups of fans for Diabolo Sport have different compositions. The largest proportion of people are over 45 at 55%, and most of them are retired individuals with more free time; their main interests are exercise, good health maintenance and learning about culture. The proportion of people aged 25-45 is 25%, and most of them are office workers with limited time who are interested in fitness, leisure and culture. The group aged 18-25 is 15% and mainly consists of school students who are looking for new things and interested in visual displays and social status. The proportion of people under the age of 18 is 5%; they are the younger generation and future talents, and they are interested in fun learning and skill development.

Geographically, the audience for the sport of Diabolo is mainly concentrated in North China, East China and Southwest China; development in Northwest China, Northeast China and other areas has been relatively slow, and its scale and influence are small. It is because of the inheritance of history, economic development and cultural policies.

2.3 Evaluation of the Communication Effects of Diabolo Sport via New Media

Communication has a large scope but a small conversion rate. Although the high-quality videos have reached a large number of views and likes and show good communication potential, their conversion rate from attention to actual participation is relatively low; thus, the number of real participants has not increased significantly. There is a problem of content homogeneity; that is, the teaching materials are not organised systematically and are neither professional nor interactive. There is no single brand image or plan for brand building, so the full effect of synergy cannot be realised, and both brand recognition and brand reputation need to be strengthened.

3. Dilemmas and Problems in the Promotion of Diabolo Sport

3.1 Aging of the Inheritor Group and Talent Gap

The first problem of the Diabolo sport is the aging of the inheritor group; most of the main participants and inheritors are middle-aged or older, there is little participation from young people, and the development of a succession talent pool has fallen behind. Older inheritors do not have the experience or energy for new media communication and other areas, and the lack of enthusiasm among young people is due to their indifference to traditional cultural cognition and the image of Diabolo sports. The Development of Diabolo Sports has many problems.

First, a talent gap exists. Based on the questionnaire survey, among the college students who participate in diabolo sports, only a small number are motivated by an interest in the culture of diabolo; many students have only gained superficial knowledge of it and believe that it lacks fashion appeal, so they are not very enthusiastic about participating. Inheritance has created a problem for the traditional master-apprentice model of individual inheritance; young people are unwilling to be apprentices, school teaching is still at a basic skill level and lacks in-depth exploration and systematic cultivation, online teaching cannot replace face-to-face classes, and thus a vicious circle in talent cultivation has occurred.

3.2 Fragmentation of Communication Content and Lack of Systematization

In the new media era, the communication content of Diabolo sport has become fragmented, its cultural connotations have been diluted, and the technical system has been divided; thus, it is difficult for the audience to gain an all-encompassing understanding. In terms of the lack of systemisation, new media

platforms do not have a regular and professional teaching content system; the quality of instructional videos is uneven, and there is a lack of content in theoretical research and other areas, which negatively affects communication effects and the exploration of cultural values.

3.3 Unbalanced Regional Development and Dispersed Resources

Development of Diabolo Sports is Uneven in Different Areas. Xingtai, Shenyang and Jinan are all at different stages of development, and the traditional strongholds of Beijing and Tianjin have achieved good results. Resources are spread across all sides and not used effectively together. The following are the results of research and analysis.

a. Although schools are now the main teaching places in line with the curriculum, there is a problem of disinterest in extracurricular activities. Promote the development of the club and build a school team.

b. Communities are the main form of spontaneous activity, but they lack professional leadership. The Direction of Optimisation is to strengthen the construction of activity areas and improve the training system.

c. Associations are organising organisations, and they have a problem of weak resource integration capacity. The goal is to promote the joint development and resource sharing of the above.

d. Enterprises: Their proportion is small, and they are not market-oriented. The two Optimisation Directions are the business model and brand cooperation.

3.4 Lagging Brand Construction and Insufficient Value Creation

Diabolo Sport has a problem of "having activities but no brand"; that is to say, there is no unified brand image and continuous operation plan for the activities, and the new media communication lacks consistent brand positioning and strategy, resulting in a vague brand image. The brands of Diabolo Sport are spread out, and there is no single, well-known brand that people are familiar with. There is no value creation because the brand was established too late. Diabolo has culture and fitness, but it has not been successfully converted into market value and social influence. The scale of the Chinese market for Diabolo in 2022 was about 300 million US dollars, and it accounted for 60% of the world's total. However, the production of cultural and creative products is slow, the integration of culture and tourism has not been well done, and the commercial operation ability is weak. Therefore, Diabolo sports do not have their own funds and depend on government funds and public donations; thus, their development is not sustainable.

4. Promotion Strategies for Diabolo Sport in the New Media Era

4.1 Build a Hierarchical and Organized Precision Promotion System

To make full use of it, a very precise promotion system should be established in line with the features and needs of all groups. A "gamified" promotion strategy has been employed to boost the interest of the young generation in Diabolo sports through games, development of campus courses and activities, challenge competitions, creation of derivative content, and so on. A divided promotion plan will be introduced to develop short and effective fitness classes for the group of office workers based on the physical and mental health benefits of Diabolo sports. A "health-oriented" promotion plan will be introduced to organise wellness classes for older people in the community and other places, combining the ideas of traditional Chinese medicine with exercise and the desire for good health.

4.2 Constructing a Multi-Scenario Integrated Promotion Model

The combination of sports and education can be used to promote the development of Diabolo sports, strengthen the inclusion of these sports in the school physical education curriculum, develop teaching materials and resources at all levels of education, establish clubs and school teams, etc. Community sports provide the foundation for fully realising the role of community organisations, set up activity stations, and conduct teaching and exchange activities. The new development of the integration of culture and tourism is to combine the Diabolo sport with local cultural and tourism resources to create cultural tourism products, organise performance and experience activities, and provide people with immersive experience scenarios. More and more people are participating in the new form of immersive cultural

tourism. By 2025, the search volume of sports and culture tourism activities on the Qingming Festival holiday will have risen by 48% year-on-year. For example, the Zhengzhou Yinji International Tourism Resort is based on an immersive experience model, and it had an overall increase of 6.59% in visitors during the holiday; Kashgar Old City has also drawn more than 170,000 tourists on the first day of the holiday due to its immersive projects, and both are very popular.

4.3 Innovating the Content and Forms of New Media Communication

The goal of content innovation is to enhance the impact of new media communication, so we need to move away from the old model of skill demonstration and create more diverse types of communication materials. Storytelling content can be used to present the history of Diabolo sports in an interesting way and move people's emotions; teaching materials should be organised systematically according to the needs of different students, entertaining works can be created by incorporating popular elements to attract the attention of young people, and finally, knowledge dissemination is also necessary to raise public awareness of Diabolo sports.

New Forms are required to meet the demands of new media communication. New media should be used to create all kinds of communication in this way. A series of short videos have been produced, and many instructional videos have been created based on them to form a viewing habit for Diabolo; regular live-streaming activities are held at different times, and various types of live broadcasts are organised to engage with the audience; topic marketing plans have been released for topical events related to Diabolo to spread information; cross-sector cooperation has been conducted with all kinds of organisations to create distinctive cultural and intellectual property (IP) products and reach a large number of people; and technology is being used to develop virtual experience products and provide immersive experiences via AR, VR, etc.

4.4 Establish a Data-driven Collaborative Development Mechanism

According to the above data, we will strengthen the planning of the promotion strategy reasonably. It is necessary to build a data collection system for the promotion of Diabolo sports, collect all kinds of data, use big data analysis to allocate promotion funds reasonably, build evaluation models, and regularly review and adjust the strategies.

Co-development is a way to solve the problem of dispersed resources. We need to build a cooperative development model with many parties, bring in all the resources from these sides, and achieve synergy. Based on the main IP of the Diabolo brand, a resource-sharing platform will be established; clear division of rights and responsibilities and benefit sharing will be made; a cross-regional collaboration mechanism will be introduced to promote the sharing of experiences and resources; and a tripartite synergy mechanism of the government, market and society will be created to build a sustainable development ecosystem.

5. Brand Innovation Plan for Diabolo Sport

5.1 Brand Positioning and Core Value Creation

The Foundation and Necessity of Building a Brand is Brand Positioning. The brand position of Diabolo Sport should be based on its special cultural characteristics and fitness values, with the main ideas being "inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, fitness and health maintenance, and cultural experience", and it should be presented as "an ideal integration of traditional Chinese culture and modern healthy living". Thus, it will be possible to pass down the culture and meet the present demand for health to go public.

The Core Values are the spirit of the Brand. The three general directions of the ideas in Diabolo Sport are:

- a. Cultural Value: The main content is historical inheritance and cultural identity; the form of expression is fine traditional Chinese culture; and the target audience is the general public.
- b. Health Value: Generally speaking, this refers to one's physical and mental health and lifestyle; it can be shown in nationwide fitness programs, and the target audience is fitness enthusiasts.
- c. Social Value: It is based on interpersonal relationships and the construction of communities; the

form of value manifestation is cultural integration for social harmony; and the recipients are the people in the community.

5.2 Brand IP Development and Visual Identity System

The development of brand intellectual property can be used to demonstrate the value of Diablo Sport and strengthen the brand. Build a brand intellectual property system for Diabolo Sports that covers the brand name, logo, slogan, image, etc. The brand name can be "China Diabolo" or something similar; the logo should combine the elements of a diabolo with cultural symbols; the slogan can be "Twirling Diabolo, Inheriting Culture", etc.; and the image may be a cartoon character or a virtual spokesperson.

The System of Visual Identity is a kind of Brand Image. A single visual identity system needs to be created for all necessary and relevant parts of Diabolo Sports to promote the professionalisation of the brand and increase its recognition.

5.3 Brand Activity Planning and Event Operation

Brand activities are good ways to promote the brand, so they should be organised with long-term goals in mind and a different structure of activities. First, create brand competition events, such as the "China Diabolo Championship", and improve the event system and operation mechanism; second, organise brand festivals, such as the "China Diabolo Cultural Festival", and combine all kinds of activities; third, hold brand roadshows in various places.

One of the ways to build a brand is by organising events; thus, a professional operation system should be established. First strengthen the multi-level event system, then unify the standards for events, add new types of events, improve communication about events, and finally expand the economic benefits of events.

5.4 Industry Integration and Value Chain

One way to expand the brand is to integrate with the industry; therefore, we should promote the joint development of Diablo Sport and related industries. The four general directions of industrial agglomeration are:

- a. Cultural tourism industry: Products and services include cultural experience tours and study tours; the target market is the cultural tourism market, and it has good development prospects.
- b. Education Industry: Products and services include training courses, teaching materials and equipment; the target market is the physical education sector, and it has good development prospects.
- c. Health Industry: Products and services include fitness classes and wellness services; the target market is the whole country's fitness market, and the development potential is medium.
- d. Cultural and Creative Industries: Products and services include cultural and creative works and digital collectibles; the target market is the cultural consumption market, and there is medium development potential.

The purpose of raising the value of the brand is to promote continuous development of the company. First, build a brand licensing system; Second, develop brand-derivative products; Third, expand brand services; Fourth, explore brand internationalization. Make an effort to promote the spread of Diabolo sports abroad and expand the influence of the international brand. Diabolo has been spread around the world by the Belt and Road Initiative. In 2019, the "Belt and Road" International Diabolo Cultural Industry Development Summit Forum was organised, and at this event, the idea of holding a federation and international competitions was put forward by the guests. Diabolo has been introduced in more than 100 countries and areas, and almost 10 national-level and about 100 city and regional-level diabolo associations have been established around the world. Over 1,000 people from 12 countries took part in the "Golden Bamboo Award" Invitational Tournament in 2018. Integrate the industrial chain, add value, build a good brand, and create a virtuous circle.

6. Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the theoretical framework of "integration of multiple scenarios - new media empowerment - brand value co-creation", this paper will systematically analyze the current promotion situation and main problems of Diablo Sport in the new media environment, and put forward targeted promotion

strategies and a brand innovation plan. Based on the above analysis, there are many problems with the Diabolo sport in the current era of new media, such as an aging group of inheritors, fragmented communication materials, uneven distribution in different regions, and weak brand building. In light of the problems mentioned above, we will build a hierarchical and organised precision-promotion system, establish a multi-scenario integrated promotion model, innovate the content and form of new media communication, and create a data-driven collaborative development mechanism. At the same time, efforts should be made to innovate the brand in areas such as brand positioning and core value creation, development of brand intellectual property, construction of a visual identity system, planning of brand activities and event organization, industry integration and value extension, etc., to promote the transformation and upgrading of Diabolo sports from a simple exercise into a cultural brand with cultural impact and market value.

Based on the above research, the following suggestions are put forward: First, we need to enhance the top-level design, establish a medium- and long-term development plan for the Diabolo sport, and clarify the goals, key tasks and safeguards of development. Second, strengthen policy support, increase financial investment and policy favouritism for the inheritance and development of the Diabolo sport, and create a good policy environment for its promotion and development. Third, strengthen the training of talent by building a talent cultivation system for Diabolo sports and training a group of high-level inheritors, coaches, referees and management staff. Fourth, promote joint development: Build a model of cooperative development for all parties and combine their resources to achieve common prosperity. Fifth, build a strong brand, unify the brand image, carry out brand activities, and increase the social influence and market competitiveness of Diabolo Sport. Sixth, strengthen overseas cooperation and use platforms such as the "Belt and Road" Initiative to promote the spread of Diabolo sport abroad and enhance the international influence of excellent traditional Chinese culture.

As one of China's excellent traditional cultures, the inheritance and development of the Diabolo sport are not only about continuing a sports event but also about building national cultural confidence and showing the strength of Chinese culture. Problems and Prospects of Diabolo Sports in the New Media Era. If we can take cultural inheritance as the foundation, use innovative development as the driving force, and set brand building as the direction, then we will be able to promote the creative transformation and innovative development of Diabolo sport, allowing this ancient folk art to gain new life and vitality in the new era.

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