Exploring the development of localization of county image construction in Anhui Province under the perspective of media fusion

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Abstract

With the unprecedented attention paid to the construction of county-level integrated media centres, the importance of building and disseminating the image of counties has been overlooked. This paper focuses on the practice of county-level integrated media centres in Anhui Province, and explores the development of localised county image construction in the context of media fusion, so as to help county-level integrated media centres effectively integrate into the ecological cycle of county development and further improve the communication and marketing of county images.

1. Introduction

County image refers to the overall image of the county administrative region, which is composed of natural and humanistic landscape, spiritual and civilized style and so on. The county is inextricably linked to the "township" of Chinese children, and the unique image of the county carries the common memories of the people rise by one side of the land and water. In the era of intelligent Internet of Things, "everything is connected", the image of the county plays a role in connecting the people of the county internally, while simultaneously spreading the culture of the county externally and enhancing the influence of the county, while contributing to the development of the county's politics, economy and culture.

The construction of a fusion media centre is a fundamental part of the modern communication system and an important component (Xie Xinzhou, *et al.*, 2019). The "Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Visionary Goals for 2035" adopted in 2020 clearly proposes to "promote the deep integration of the media, implement a full media communication project, strengthen new mainstream media, and build and use county-level integrated media centres". In China's exploration of media integration, the construction of county-level integrated media centres is undoubtedly a nother milestone point. By the end of the same year, China's county-level integrated media centres were basically licensed to operate nationwide, a major step forward in the practice of bottom-up media integration. Under the guidance of the national strategy, the flourishing county-level integrated media centres are becoming a vehicle for building and spreading the image of the county. However, in the current practice of building county images, the problem of unclear self-positioning of counties, failure to combine regional industrial and cultural characteristics, and the template application of a small number of successful cases, resulting in time-consuming and costly efforts with little success, is frequent.

2. City Image Down: County Image Construction

2.1 Media image: the calling card of local marketing

At the beginning of the development of new media in China, scholars have already started to pay attention to the role of new media in shaping the brand image of cities. Making full use of various new media and carrying out integrated marketing and communication activities has become an important way to shape the brand image of a city (Long Sha, Wang Qingyun, 2011). With the rise of mobile Internet and the consequent mobile media and social media, there are more channels for city image communication (Zhao Jimin, 2018).

Philip Kotler, the father of modern marketing, put forward the concept of place marketing. He believed that in global competition, local governments should regard the place as a product that can be created, packaged and marketed, analyze the internal and external environment in which it is located, determine the target market including the target population, the target industry and target area according to the strengths and weaknesses of the area, target the needs of the target market and make full use of all local resources to plan future development. The needs of the target market are identified and all local resources are utilised to plan the future development of (1993). In the mobile Internet era, the media image of a region is increasingly becoming a business card for local marketing, and it is vital to create a medium image that is unique to the region and shows its strengths. The improvement of Internet technology and the development of media platforms has greatly increased the efficiency of the dissemination of audio-visual works, and short videos and songs have frequently become "hit", which has played an invaluable role in shaping the regional media image. For example, the song "Chengdu", which expresses the longing and sadness of wanderers for a small city, has infected countless listeners and brought Chengdu's cultural tourism industry to life; the short video blogger's "Shandong Heze Cao County, 666", with its thick dialect accent, has made the "Cao County stunt" a hit on the Internet, making Cao County become known to the public.

2.2 County image: the downward spiral of city image

As one of the most stable units in China's administrative divisions, the 'county' has survived over two thousand years of history. In this long term stability, the soil of the county has made it easier for the unique "local feeling" of the Chinese people to take root and for people in the same area to develop a strong sense of identity. Counties are the main subject of the implementation of rural revitalisation and urbanisation strategies, and have received much attention in recent years. Local marketing theory is not only applicable to cities, but can also be applied to counties. By creating a unique brand image of the county, the county's spiritual culture and material products can be better disseminated, thereby driving the county's industrial and economic development. Before the county-level integrated media centres were built, there was already spread UGC content on new media platforms that encouraged users to share their daily lives and were unconsciously spreading the county's image to the outside world. These market-controlled, flow-driven original contents often presented one-sided, or even wrong, image of the county, making it difficult to restore the true picture of the county and weakly contributing to the development of the county's industrial economy.

The full listing of county-level integrated media centres provides an effective way to solve the problem of building the image of the county. The county-level integrated media centre integrates regional traditional media resources to create a full media communication matrix, which is a major exploration practice for mainstream media to integrate and recreate and regain the right to speak. County-level integrated media centres are expected to accurately position county brands and efficiently disseminate county images. For a long time, due to the shortage of human and material resources, limited regional economic level, incomplete infrastructure and lagging information, counties have failed to keep up with the rapid development of information technology, increasing the gap with the cities, losing young and strong talents, accelerating the ageing of the county population, which is not conducive to the economic development of the county. In the era of intelligent Internet of Things, the technical and capital thresholds for obtaining traffic through new media platforms, whether it is e-commerce with goods or cultural tourism publicity, are greatly reduced, and the backward counties are once again on the same starting line as the cities. In the construction of county-level integrated media centres, building and spreading a good county image helps to enhance the inner cohesion and outer competitiveness of counties and seize the good opportunities for county economic development.

3. Building the county's image: focusing on regional special industries

As of today, there are 59 counties (cities) in Anhui Province. Anhui Province is located at the border between the north and the south of China, and the natural environment, climatic conditions, transportation and industry base varies greatly between counties. In general, the development drivers of counties in the north and south of Anhui province are different. Most of the southern areas have a weak industrial base and focus on developing agricultural and tourism resources, while more areas in the north have a certain industrial base and develop local

industries and attract investment at the same time. County-level integrated media centres should combine regional characteristics and tailor their publicity strategies to showcase a distinctive county image and contribute to local economic development.

3.1 Empowering primary industries through agriculture

First of all, take the economically developed agricultural county of Wuhu City as an example. The county is located in the middle reaches of the Yangtze River and has an aquaculture area of 470,000 acres, with unique freshwater aquaculture resources in the region, and its special agricultural industries such as crab, turtle and turtle, and integrated rice and shrimp farming are well-known far and wide. The local integrated media centre can make use of platforms such as WeChat public number and ShakeYin short video to create a county image of "the hometown of fish and rice" and "strong agriculture with science and technology", starting with the promotion of agricultural products and modern agricultural science and technology to showcase the quality and characteristics of local agricultural products and at the same time The programme will showcase the quality and characteristics of local agricultural products as well as the development of modern agriculture. Secondly, for economically underdeveloped poor counties, such as Shitai County in Chizhou City, which is rich in tea, mineral water, vegetables, fruits and other agricultural products and by-products, combined with the advantages of selenium-rich resources, to create the image of "Shitai selenium-rich" and "Wanmei agricultural products". In addition, through interviews with local poor households and poverty alleviation cadres, you can also promote the local new rural construction and poverty alleviation achievements, so that more people can understand the local poverty alleviation policies and initiatives, and recruit investors.

3.2 Industrial revitalisation and discovery of the secondary sector

As the first county in the province with a GDP value exceeding 100 billion, Feixi County has a strong foundation in the automotive and home appliance industries, and attaches importance to the introduction of scientific research talents and is committed to industrial upgrading, and in recent years has made efforts to build three strategic emerging industry clusters: new energy, intelligent manufacturing and biomedicine. The local media centre can publicise the advantages of local industries such as new energy and smart home appliances through graphics and audio-visuals, showcase the development achievements of local industries, highlight the innovation and development potential of local industries with the image of "a strong county in science and innovation", and attract talents and foreign investment with the policy of "double attraction". The "Double Invitation" policy attracts talents and foreign investment.

3.3 Innovation in cultural tourism and the tertiary sector

As a gathering place of ancient Huizhou merchants and one of the birthplaces of Huizhou culture, the county has Xidi and Hongcun World Cultural Heritage sites as well as a number of cultural heritage protection units. The local county-level integrated media centre can create a "painted countryside" around the "world cultural heritage", "Huizhou-style architecture" and other cultural and tourism features by filming and producing promotional videos and publishing WeChat public number graphics. "The brand image of "Millennium Yixian County" and "Famous Historical and Cultural City" can be used to promote the Huizhou culture and showcase the achievements of heritage protection.

4. The significance of county image building

4.1 It helps the government to control public opinion and providing better service management

Regional image is the basic impression and overall evaluation of the actual development status and situation of the region's political, economic, cultural and natural environment in the minds of the public (Zhao Dingtao, 1998). As a medium for building a good county image, the county-level integrated media centre publishes the latest policies, current affairs information, employment information and other news content in an open, timely and transparent manner through a full-media communication matrix, making it easy for the public to access hotspot information that most concerns people's livelihood, improving the transparency of government affairs and enhancing the credibility of the government. The image of the government is also one of the constituent elements of the county's diverse image. In the 5G era of information explosion, the impact of the Internet and traffic makes opportunities and challenges coexist. Establishing a good government image can effectively enhance the level of government agenda setting, improve the government's ability to respond to online public opinion crises, mainstream media control the discourse and do a good job of guiding correct public opinion, thus improving residents' media literacy and political literacy. It allows the county government to better understand the voices of the public, the public to better participate in county governance, and the government and the public to unite as one to build a better home.

4.2 Create a brand image of the county and promote the development of related local industries

Under the environment of integrated media, e-commerce based on algorithmic promotion and logistics services of new media platforms has developed a relatively mature marketing model, and its ability to drive the regional industrial economy is evident to all. The new media era is an era of decentralisation that empowers "tiny individuals", who is given the opportunity to express themselves through self-media (Du Jixi, Chen Lu, 2019). County-level integrated media centres dig deeper into the county's special industries, showcase local strengths and characteristics, create image symbols and logos with regional characteristics and quality, and enhance the brand competitiveness of the county. The new media platform can be used to expand the communication effect, effectively enhance the image and visibility of the county, promote the development of local industries, further enhance the "self-blooding" function of county-level integrated media centres, and achieve the goal of "developing county-level integrated media centres to promote the construction of a good county image this will further enhance the "self-blooding" function of the county-level integrated media centre, realising the closed loop from "developing the county-level integrated media centre to promote a good county image" to "building a good county image to promote the development of the county-level integrated media centre.

4.3 Spreading regional culture externally and linking up with local communities internally

According to a report by the National Bureau of Statistics, China's urbanisation rate will have reached 65.22% by 2022. The transformation of urbanisation has brought about the blurring of local identity, the homogenisation of urban landscapes and other problems, and the disappearance of the "Sense of Place". Sense of Place refers to people's perception of a particular environment, the emotional attachment and satisfaction between people and place, the construction of identity and identification, a human-place relationship with cultural and social characteristics, and a dynamic process (Cheng, C.F., 2020). As the environmental changes caused by high urbanisation are irreversible, the construction of an image of the county as an emotional symbol is a viable solution to the imbalanced human-place relationship. The recording of cultural products such as dialects, traditional costumes and ancient buildings that preserve the characteristics of the county and carry common memories can, on the one hand, help to disseminate local culture externally, raise the attention of people inside and outside the county to regional culture, protect endangered intangible cultural heritage and preserve Chinese cultural diversity; on the other hand, it can help to strengthen the sense of place internally, give people identity, emotion and regional identity, deepen the emotional ties between each other. It is also conducive to strengthening the sense of place, giving people identity, emotion and regional identity, deepening the emotional ties between them, linking them to each other, enhancing the cultural confidence of the residents and promoting the process of building social and spiritual civilisation.

5.Suggested strategies for localising the construction of the county's image

5.1 Reinforcing regional characteristics and highlighting industrial advantages

Understand the historical, cultural, geographical and natural environmental characteristics of the county and incorporate these elements into the brand image. Emphasising regional characteristics helps to create a unique brand image and attract more tourists and investors. Analyse the county's industrial structure and developed direction, and combine industrial strengths with the brand image. For example, the development of special industries such as agriculture, tourism and manufacturing can bring economic vitality to the county.

5.2 Strengthening government support for local activities

The government should actively promote the building of the county's image and formulate relevant policies and measures to create favourable conditions for the county's development. At the same time, it should strengthen cooperation with enterprises and social organisations to jointly promote the construction of the county's image. Improve the infrastructure conditions in the county, such as transportation, education, healthcare and accommodation, to provide a convenient living environment for residents and visitors. Good infrastructure plays an important role in enhancing the county's image. Organise various local events, such as folk festivals, cultural exhibitions and sporting events, to raise the county's profile and influence. Also, promote local events through online and offline channels to attract tourists and investors to the county's image.

5.3 Innovative marketing strategies to build brand alliances

Use county-level integrated media-related resources and media to build the county's brand image. Display information about the county's customs and attractions through webcasts, short videos, pictures and other forms to attract potential customers to pay attention to the county. Encourage enterprises, scenic spots and hotels in the county to establish brand alliances to jointly promote the county's image. Through a win-win cooperation approach, the overall brand value and influence will be enhanced.

In short, county-level integrated media centres around the world should dig deep into the characteristics of the

county, accurately positioning the county's image, highlighting industrial advantages, strengthening local events, improving infrastructure conditions, innovative marketing strategies, as well as government and social support and participation. It is not advisable to blindly follow the crowd or copy and reproduce foreign experiences. Use a variety of tools to create a competitive county brand image.

6.Concluding remarks

Based on the research on county-level integrated media centres in Anhui Province, this paper proposes that in the construction of county-level integrated media, the issue of building a county image should be focused. The construction of a good county image is conducive to the government's control of public opinion positions and better service management; it is conducive to building the brand image of the county and promoting the development of local related industries; it is conducive to spreading regional culture externally and linking township ties internally. We hope that the county-level integrated media centre can keep pace with the tide of integrated media construction, grasp the policy windfall and establish a sense of in-depth integration; put an end to the phenomenon of hanging, close to the real life of the masses; combine the characteristics of regional communication, precisely position a county with a policy to better serve the masses in order to obtain long-term development.

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