

Marketing Planning Research on the Integration of Regional Culture into Milk Tea Products

-- A Case Study of Yongjia County

Huiyi Su, Keyi Shou, Gaoxiang Chen*, Tanzhun Yu, Jingping Fu, Yuxing Ma

Wenzhou Polytechnic, Wenzhou, Zhejiang 325004, China

*Corresponding author: Gaoxiang Chen (Email: yiefanshin@163.com)

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes that Yongjia culture, an indigenous regional culture of Wenzhou, possesses profound historical roots and unique cultural charm. In recent years, with the rise of milk tea products, an increasing number of young people choose to enjoy a cup of milk tea during their leisure time. This marketing planning adopts story-based marketing by integrating distinctive Yongjia cultural elements into milk tea products, introducing a city-exclusive beverage made from the local specialty, Wuniu Early Tea. Through online promotion on platforms like Douyin and Xiaohongshu for new product previews and event announcements, as well as establishing offline themed stores infused with Yongjia cultural elements, offering limited-edition collaborative packaging featuring a special logo, and accompanying promotional videos, the strategy aims to attract customers, enhance brand image, and promote Yongjia's local culture.

KEYWORDS

Regional Culture; Milk Tea Products; Marketing Planning; Yongjia Culture.

1. CHAPTER 1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.1. Yongjia Culture

Yongjia County, part of Wenzhou City in Zhejiang Province, is a renowned historical and cultural county in China, nurturing a unique Yongjia culture with deep-rooted traditions. Yongjia culture boasts a long history, incorporating traditional agrarian civilization and the openness and inclusiveness of maritime culture, forming a captivating cultural identity.

1.1.1. Agrarian Culture

The foundation of Yongjia culture lies in its profound agrarian traditions. As a region in the Jiangnan water country, agrarian civilization has flourished here. Generations of farming techniques and customs have not only nourished the land but also shaped the diligent and simple nature of Yongjia people. This character is evident in their daily lives, from hard work in the fields to harmony among neighbors, embodying the agrarian essence of Yongjia culture.

1.1.2. Maritime Culture

Meanwhile, Yongjia culture also showcases the openness and inclusiveness of maritime culture. Bordering the East China Sea, Yongjia has been a vital node on the ancient Maritime Silk Road. This geographical position allows Yongjia culture to maintain its traditions while absorbing cultural

elements from around the world. The open mindset and innovative spirit of Yongjia people are vivid expressions of this cultural fusion, evident in architecture, cuisine, and folk art, showcasing a diverse and inclusive cultural landscape.

1.1.3. Celebrity Culture

Yongjia culture is also renowned for its profound cultural heritage and humanistic spirit. With a rich history, Yongjia has produced numerous celebrities, such as Xie Lingyun and Wang Xizhi, whose achievements and works have added significant value to Yongjia culture. These cultural celebrities' accomplishments not only demonstrate the superior quality of Yongjia culture but also inspire generations of Yongjia people to pursue excellence and pass on the culture.

1.1.4. Historical Culture

Yongjia's architectural style follows the Song Dynasty, with Furong Ancient Village, Lishui Street, and Cangpo Village as its cores. Through cultural inheritance, industrial diversification, and brand enhancement, Yongjia has successfully created "Jiangnan Song Village" and incubated the cultural identity of "Songyun Nanxi." Yongjia is also the birthplace of the Yongjia School of Thought, the hometown of Southern Opera, and the origin of the Cultivation-Reading Culture, all centered on Song culture.

1.1.5. Specialty Culture

Among the numerous specialties, Wuniu Early Tea is undoubtedly the most representative. Named for its production in Wuniu Town, Yongjia, Wuniu Early Tea has been cultivated since the Ming and Qing dynasties, boasting a long history. Its superior quality, fragrant aroma, and fresh taste make it a unique tea variety. The cultivation and processing techniques of Wuniu Early Tea have been passed down from generation to generation, reflecting Yongjia people's deep affection and exquisite skills in tea making. Besides Wuniu Early Tea, Yongjia boasts other notable specialties, such as Donggao Red Persimmons, famous for their diverse varieties and delicious taste, and Yongjia Wheat Cakes, a local delicacy cherished by Yongjia people.

1.2. Current Market Status of Milk Tea Products

The current market status of milk tea products shows the characteristics of high-speed growth, a wide range of consumer groups, fierce brand competition, product innovation and diversity, and online and offline integration. At the same time, milk tea products are also facing challenges such as food safety, and need to continuously improve the quality and service level to meet the needs of consumers.

1.3. How to Conduct Joint Marketing

The reason for choosing to link Yongjia culture with milk tea products lies in both the unique charm of Yongjia culture and consumers' demand for cultural experience and personalized consumption, as well as the need for business innovation. This joint activity will adopt a marketing method that combines online and offline. Online, multiple platforms such as Douyin and Xiaohongshu will be used for new product previews, activity announcements, etc. Offline, specific theme stores with Yongjia cultural elements will be opened, limited-edition joint packaging of Yongjia with a specific joint logo will be launched, and marketing methods such as attracting consumers to check in by cooperating with promotional short films will be used to enhance the brand image and promote the local Yongjia culture.

2. CHAPTER 2 MARKET ANALYSIS

2.1. Analysis of the Current Milk Tea Product Market

The current milk tea product market is in a stage of vigorous development, with broad development prospects and huge market potential. However, in the face of fierce market competition, milk tea products need to continuously innovate and enhance their own strength to gain a foothold in the market and achieve success. From the product perspective, milk tea products not only provide traditional milk tea flavors but also continuously innovate and launch various novel and distinctive milk tea products to meet the needs of different consumers. At the same time, milk tea products also pay attention to the quality and taste of the products, using high-quality raw materials to ensure the health and safety of the products. From the perspective of market layout, milk tea products are mainly distributed in densely populated places such as urban business districts and around schools, making it convenient for consumers to purchase. At the same time, with the development of the Internet, many milk tea products have also started to carry out online sales and deliver the products to consumers through takeaway platforms and other means.

2.1.1. Market Status

With the improvement of consumers' quality of life and the diversification of food culture, milk tea, as a fashionable and delicious beverage, has been loved by the majority of consumers. Since 2021, major ready-to-drink tea brands have begun to expand their scale, and "surpassing 10,000 stores" has become a common strategy for a while. In almost every street in big cities, the figure of milk tea products can be seen. With people's pursuit and love for milk tea, more and more milk tea stores have opened in the market. According to statistics, in 2022, the number of stores in the national milk tea industry was the largest for Mixue Bingcheng, with 16,227 stores, followed by Shuyi Shaoxiancao, with 6,466 stores. In 2022, the demand for ready-to-drink milk tea in China exceeded 13 billion cups. At the same time, with the improvement of consumers' health awareness, the demand for mid-to-high-end milk tea products has gradually increased. Driven by the upgrade of product raw materials and the growth of residents' income, the price of milk tea products in China has continued to rise. In 2023, the average consumption unit price of ready-to-drink milk tea in China rose to 14.03 yuan per cup. Benefiting from the increase in downstream market demand and the rise in product prices, the market size of the ready-to-drink milk tea industry in China has continued to expand in recent years, and the market size of the ready-to-drink milk tea industry in China exceeded 170 billion yuan in 2022. At present, China's milk tea industry has formed a three-way pattern of street milk tea, new Chinese-style tea drinks, fresh fruit milk, and fresh fruit tea. Among them, street milk tea is represented by COCO and A Little Tea, new Chinese-style milk tea is represented by Nayuki and Heytea, and fresh fruit milk and fresh fruit tea are represented by Bocha and Tea Orange. In general, the market competition in China's milk tea product industry is very fierce.

According to Frost & Sullivan data, from 2018 to 2023, the market of ready-to-drink tea shops in third-tier cities and fourth-tier and below cities grew rapidly, and the market size increased from 16.3 billion yuan and 21.4 billion yuan in 2018 to 71.6 billion yuan and 73.5 billion yuan in 2023, with a compound annual growth rate of 34.4% and 28.0%, respectively. It is expected that with the rapid development of the entire market, the market of ready-to-drink tea shops in third-tier cities and fourth-tier and below cities will further grow at a compound annual growth rate of 18.7% and 17.8% from 2023 to 2028, respectively.

2.1.2. Competitive Situation

In the past two decades, China's tea beverage market has undergone tremendous changes, and the milk tea industry has also moved from the initial powder mixing era to the current new-style tea drinking era. The competition in the milk tea product market is increasingly fierce, and major brands

have increased their investment to compete for market share. At present, milk tea products in the market are mainly divided into two categories: large chain brands and small independent brands.

Large chain brands have a certain advantage in the market with their strong brand influence and financial strength. They usually have a perfect supply chain and training system, which can provide stable product and service quality. At the same time, they also pay attention to marketing and brand promotion, attracting consumers through various channels.

However, small independent brands also have certain competitiveness. They usually pay more attention to product innovation and characteristics, and can provide more personalized and differentiated products and services. At the same time, they also pay more attention to interaction and communication with consumers, and can establish closer customer relationships.

2.1.3. Development Trend

In the future, the milk tea product market will continue to maintain a high-speed development trend. On the one hand, as consumers' love for milk tea continues to increase, market demand will continue to grow; on the other hand, with the continuous emergence of new technologies and new models, the milk tea product market will also usher in more development opportunities. Specifically, the development trend of the future milk tea product market may focus on the following aspects: ① From the perspective of health, with the popularization of the concept of healthy eating, consumers' health requirements for milk tea are also getting higher and higher. In the future, milk tea products will pay more attention to the health attributes of the products and launch more healthy products such as low sugar, low fat, and no additives; ② From the perspective of quality, quality is the key to the survival and development of milk tea products. In the future, milk tea products will pay more attention to the quality and taste of the products, using higher-quality raw materials and processes to enhance the competitiveness of the products; ③ From the perspective of diversification, with the diversification of consumer needs, milk tea products will continue to launch new flavors and new products to meet the needs of different consumers. At the same time, it will also focus on product innovation and differentiation to attract more consumers.

2.2. Characteristics, Needs, and Consumption Behaviors of the Target Audience

The current target audience of the milk tea product market can be mainly divided into young people, students, office workers, young parents and housewives, and the middle-aged and elderly groups. Most of them are female users, and the majority are young and middle-aged users.

2.2.1. Young People Group

The main force of milk tea product consumption is the young people group, who pursue fashion, novelty, and personalization. For milk tea, they not only value the taste but also pay attention to the packaging design, brand image, and social attributes of the product. Young people are usually willing to pay a higher price for high-quality milk tea and are willing to try various innovative flavors and combinations. In terms of consumption behavior, young people are more inclined to purchase through online platforms, such as takeaway platforms or brand official websites. They like convenient shopping methods and are willing to share their consumption experience on social media.

2.2.2. Student Group

The important target customers of milk tea products are the student group. They are usually price-sensitive, but they also have certain requirements for taste and quality. The student group usually likes to taste milk tea with friends in their spare time or after school to enjoy leisure time. In terms of consumption behavior, students are more inclined to choose milk tea products near the school or in the student gathering area, and pay attention to the preferential activities and membership system of the store. In addition, students are also willing to purchase through online platforms and enjoy the convenience of delivery to the dormitory.

2.2.3. Office Worker Group

Office workers usually have a busy work schedule, and their demand for milk tea mainly focuses on convenience, speed, and refreshing. They like to buy milk tea products with exquisite packaging and convenient portability for enjoyment during the commute or work breaks. In terms of consumption behavior, office workers are more inclined to choose milk tea products near the office building or order through takeaway platforms. They pay attention to the quality and taste of the products and are willing to pay a certain premium for high-quality milk tea.

2.2.4. Young Parents and Housewives Group

When choosing milk tea, this group pays more attention to the health, nutrition, and taste of the product. They usually choose milk tea products without additives, low sugar, and low fat to meet the taste needs of family members. In terms of consumption behavior, they are more inclined to choose milk tea products with high brand awareness and good reputation. At the same time, they will also pay attention to the preferential activities and membership system of the store to save family expenses.

2.2.5. Middle-aged and Elderly Group

The demand for milk tea in the middle-aged and elderly group is relatively small, but they usually choose traditional flavors and classic combinations. They pay attention to the quality and taste of the product, and also have higher requirements for the service attitude and environment of the milk tea product. In terms of consumption behavior, the middle-aged and elderly group is more inclined to choose offline stores for purchase. They like to go to the store in person to select and taste milk tea. In addition, they will also pay attention to the word-of-mouth and evaluation of the store to choose milk tea products with good reputation.

3. CHAPTER 3 LINKAGE PLANNING AND DESIGN FOR THE INTEGRATION OF YONGJIA REGIONAL CULTURE

3.1. Store Design

For the store design, colors inspired by the landscapes of Yongjia, such as dark green and light blue, can be chosen to create a fresh and natural atmosphere. Traditional patterns or elements from folk stories of Yongjia, such as the waves of Nanxi River and the wonders of Shiwei Rock, can be used on the walls or in the display areas of the store and presented through hand-painted or modern art forms. Traditional crafts or handicrafts from Yongjia, such as stone carvings and bamboo weavings, can be arranged in the store to allow customers to feel the artistic atmosphere of Yongjia while enjoying milk tea.

Design antique-style tables, chairs, and decorations to make customers feel as if they are in the ancient streets and alleys of Yongjia. Utilize lighting and mirror elements to create a sense of the integration of the ancient and the modern, which is both modern and full of traditional charm.

Set up a Yongjia culture experience area, such as a Yongjia dialect teaching corner and a Yongjia traditional clothing and custom experience area, so that customers can have a deeper understanding and experience of Yongjia culture while tasting milk tea.

3.2. Product Innovation

Develop a milk tea series with Yongjia flavor based on the characteristic ingredients and flavors of Yongjia. By using the tea or fruits unique to Yongjia, create unique milk tea flavors. For example, the Wuniu Early Tea, a specialty of Yongjia, can be integrated into the production of milk tea. Combining with Wuniu Early Tea, launch a special milk tea series, such as "Wuniu Early Tea Milk Foam" and "Wuniu Early Tea Milk Tea Jelly". Replace the original tea base with the tea base of

Wuniu Early Tea and combine it in a certain proportion to create new drinks. Make it a city-limited specialty drink or launch a new series to stimulate consumers' desire to buy. Also, combine Yongjia's traditional delicacies, such as wheat cakes and Jinjin Dumplings, to develop innovative combinations of milk tea and snacks, allowing customers to taste the authentic food of Yongjia while enjoying milk tea.

Launch seasonal limited-edition milk tea products based on the four-season scenery and characteristic ingredients of Yongjia. For example, in spring, launch the Mufurong Milk Tea inspired by the Mufurong in Yongjia, and in autumn, launch the Red Persimmon Milk Tea featuring the Red Persimmon in Yongjia.

Design milk tea products with stories based on the historical figures or stories of Yongjia. For example, launch specialty milk tea named after Yongjia celebrities, or print traditional patterns or story illustrations of Yongjia on the milk tea cups to increase the cultural added value of the products.

Provide a milk tea DIY customization service, allowing customers to choose tea, milk source, ingredients, etc. according to their own tastes and preferences to make their own Yongjia-flavored milk tea.

4. CHAPTER 4 BRAND PROMOTION STRATEGY

This marketing plan will combine the characteristic cultural elements of Yongjia with milk tea products to carry out a linkage activity. It will launch a city-limited drink using the Wuniu Early Tea, a specialty from Yongjia. Through online platforms such as Douyin and Xiaohongshu for new product previews, activity announcements, and offline by opening specific theme stores with Yongjia cultural elements, launching Yongjia limited-edition co-branded packaging with a specific linkage logo, and cooperating with promotional short films to attract consumers to check in and other marketing methods, the brand image will be enhanced and the local culture of Yongjia will be promoted.

4.1. Online Marketing

4.1.1. Social Media Marketing

Xiaohongshu/Weibo/WeChat Promotion: Utilize social platforms such as Xiaohongshu, Weibo, and WeChat to publish articles, pictures, and videos about the linkage between Yongjia culture and milk tea products, as well as subsequent new product previews (such as the launch of the city-limited version of Wuniu Early Tea or the new drinks in the Wuniu Early Tea series), activity announcements, and other content to attract fans' attention and forwarding.

Short Video Marketing: Produce short videos, subsequent promotional videos, and promotional materials about Yongjia culture and milk tea products, and release them on platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou to enhance the brand's exposure by leveraging the popularity of short videos. For example, when promoting the city-limited drinks of the Wuniu Early Tea series, a promotional short film can be made by combining the introduction of Wuniu Early Tea, the natural scenery of Yongjia, and the characteristics of milk tea.

Live Interaction: Invite internet celebrities or KOLs for live interaction to showcase cultural elements such as traditional Yongjia stories and the milk tea making process, interact with the audience in real-time, and enhance brand awareness.

4.1.2. Content Marketing

Through content cooperation and co-creation, collaborate with local cultural institutions, media, or opinion leaders to jointly create content related to Yongjia culture, such as stories, comics, songs, etc., and showcase the charm of Yongjia culture in different forms. Users can also be invited to participate

in content co-creation, such as collecting users' creative stories, pictures, videos, etc. about Yongjia culture or milk tea products to increase users' sense of participation and belonging.

4.1.3. Online Activities and Interaction

Hold online activities such as Yongjia culture knowledge contests and Yongjia culture-themed photography competitions to attract users to participate and share on social media, expanding the brand's influence.

Set up online interaction sessions, such as allowing users to vote for their favorite Yongjia cultural elements to be integrated into milk tea products, increasing users' participation and stickiness.

4.2. Offline Marketing

4.2.1. Cultural Theme Marketing Activities

Cultural Story Sharing Session: Hold a sharing session on Yongjia culture in the store or in a cooperative cultural space, invite cultural experts or local story inheritors to tell the history and culture of Yongjia, especially the introduction of Wuniu Early Tea, while promoting milk tea products and providing Yongjia specialty snacks, such as Yongjia wheat cakes, dried red persimmons, etc., so that customers can experience the food culture of Yongjia while tasting milk tea.

Featured Cultural Experience Activities: Combine the characteristics of Yongjia culture, such as traditional handicrafts and folk performances, to hold experience activities in the store, allowing customers to feel the charm of Yongjia culture while tasting milk tea.

Cultural Theme Exhibition: Hold a Yongjia culture-themed exhibition in the store or at a cooperative venue, displaying historical relics, pictures, and materials of Yongjia culture to attract customers to stop and learn about the cultural story behind the brand.

Outdoor Promotion Activities: Hold outdoor promotion activities in crowded business districts, parks, and other locations, and promote the products that link Yongjia culture with milk tea products to passers-by by setting up display stands and distributing promotional materials. For example, design photo check-in points with Yongjia characteristics, such as the reproduction of scenes like Wuniu Early Tea fields and Yongjia ancient villages, and provide Yongjia featured clothing or props for customers to take photos and check in, increasing the fun and interactivity of the activity.

4.2.2. Check-in Pop-up Store Marketing Activities

Open a specific pop-up store with Yongjia cultural elements offline. Create a specific linkage logo and limited-edition co-branded packaging combined with Yonghua cultural elements, and promote it by cooperating with the promotional short film of Yongjia culture. The drinks in the Wuniu Early Tea series can be the main promoted drinks, and main marketing activities can be carried out for them. For example, set up corresponding packages where buying a certain number of drinks in the Wuniu Early Tea series can obtain related series peripherals.

Cultural Theme Discount: During specific festivals or events, launch discount activities related to Yongjia culture, such as enjoying discounts when buying milk tea during the "Yongjia Culture Festival".

Member Points Activity: Establish a member points system, where customers can accumulate points by purchasing milk tea, and the points can be used to exchange for peripheral gifts with Yongjia cultural characteristics or enjoy more discounts on other products in the store.

4.3. Cross-border Cooperation

Cooperate with Local Tourism Agencies: Include milk tea products in tourism routes and combine them with games as part of the cultural experience to attract tourists to come and taste.

Cooperate with Other Cultural Brands: Carry out cross-border co-branding cooperation with other brands with Yongjia cultural characteristics to jointly launch limited-edition products or hold co-branding activities to expand the brand's influence.

5. CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

From the perspective of market analysis, Yongjia, as a famous historical and cultural city, possesses abundant human resources and unique natural landscapes, attracting a large number of tourists and citizens. With the continuous upgrading of the consumer market and the rise of the young consumer group, milk tea products, as a fashionable and healthy beverage consumption method, have gradually gained the favor of consumers. However, there are numerous milk tea products in the market, and the competition is fierce. How to stand out, enhance the brand influence and market competitiveness has become an important issue we face. Through in-depth market research, we have found that linking Yongjia culture with milk tea products can not only attract the attention of more young consumers but also increase the differentiated competitiveness of milk tea products. Yongjia culture has a profound foundation and wide recognition. Combining it with milk tea products can not only allow consumers to feel the influence of culture while tasting delicious milk tea but also enhance the connotation and attractiveness of the brand.

In terms of linkage planning and design, we focus on combining Yongjia cultural elements with all aspects of milk tea products to create a strong cultural atmosphere and provide a unique consumption experience. In store design, we adopt the theme colors and decorations characteristic of Yongjia to create a store environment with local characteristics. At the same time, we also set up an interactive experience area to allow customers to personally feel the charm of Yongjia culture. In product innovation, we combine the characteristic ingredients and flavors of Yongjia to launch the Wuniu Early Tea milk tea series with Yongjia flavor. These products not only meet the taste needs of consumers but also showcase the charm of Yongjia culture through unique taste and packaging design. In addition, we have planned a series of cultural activities, such as Yongjia culture lectures and exhibitions, to attract more consumers to participate and gain a deeper understanding of Yongjia culture. These activities not only enhance the popularity and reputation of milk tea products but also increase the participation and experience of consumers.

In terms of brand promotion, we adopt a combination of online and offline methods to expand the influence and popularity of the brand. Online, we make full use of online channels such as social media and short-video platforms to release relevant information about the linkage marketing of Yongjia culture and milk tea products, attracting the attention of more online users. At the same time, we also cooperate with bloggers and internet celebrities related to Yongjia culture, inviting them to experience the store and share it with their fans, increasing the exposure and dissemination power of the activity. Offline, we set up promotional display boards and distribute leaflets in the surrounding areas of milk tea products to improve the popularity of the activity. At the same time, we will also organize customers to participate in Yongjia culture experience activities, such as DIY making Yongjia specialty milk tea and participating in Yongjia traditional culture experience courses, to enhance the participation and experience of customers.

In general, this linkage planning of Yongjia culture and milk tea products will be a challenging and opportunistic attempt. We will continue to strive to explore the connotation and characteristics of Yongjia culture, deeply integrate it with milk tea products, and promote the development and market expansion of the brand. At the same time, we will also constantly pay attention to market changes and customer needs, continuously optimize and improve the marketing strategy to achieve long-term brand development and market competitive advantage.

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Notes on contributors:

Huiyi Su is a student in the Yongjia College at Wenzhou Polytechnic.

Keyi Shou is a student in the School of Digital Economy and Trade at Wenzhou Polytechnic.

Gaoxiang Chen is a lecturer in the School of Digital Economy and Trade at Wenzhou Polytechnic.

Tanzhun Yu is a lecturer in the School of Design at Wenzhou Polytechnic.

Jingping Fu is a student in the Yongjia College at Wenzhou Polytechnic.

Yuxing Ma is an assistant in the Dean's Office at Wenzhou Polytechnic.

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