

The Transformation and Upgrading Path of Tourism Industry in Ceramic Cultural and Creative Agglomeration Area under the Background of "Traffic" to "Retention": A Qualitative Analysis Based on Jingdezhen

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Abstract: Driven by influencer marketing and digital traffic, the traffic economy has profoundly transformed the integration landscape of cultural tourism industries, accelerating the transformation and upgrading of traditional tourism sectors. As a national demonstration zone for cultural-tourism integration, the Jingdezhen Ceramic Cultural and Creative Cluster is facing dual opportunities in industrial convergence and high-quality development. This study takes the Jingdezhen Ceramic Cultural Cluster as a case study to analyze the impact mechanisms of influencer phenomena on tourism transformation, focusing on their roles in traffic acquisition, brand revitalization, spatial renewal, and consumption upgrading. Through theoretical analysis, case studies, and real data, we systematically identify key challenges and optimization strategies in cultural-tourism integration. The findings indicate that influencer effects can effectively stimulate ceramic cultural tourism consumption vitality, enhance urban tourism brand value, extend industrial chains, and propel Jingdezhen's transition from resource-dependent development to brand-driven growth and immersive experiential tourism. This research provides theoretical foundations and practical insights for resource-based cities to achieve sustainable cultural-tourism integration and industrial upgrading.

Keywords: Internet Celebrity Breakout, Ceramic Cultural and Creative Industry Cluster Area, Tourism Industry, Transformation and Upgrading.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the development of heritage cities, governance constraints often limit innovation space and weaken sustainability orientation. Issues such as insufficient interdepartmental coordination, weak market mechanisms, rigid planning, uneven operational capabilities, and short-term performance prioritization tend to reinforce development models focused on traffic generation, risk avoidance, and passive compliance. Under this logic, governance entities struggle to drive long-term innovation or dynamically adjust protection and development strategies. Jingdezhen serves as a typical case: despite promoting cultural tourism through ceramic heritage, excessive reliance on visitor numbers, imperfect coordination mechanisms, inadequate resource integration, and informal operational models remain key constraints in transitioning from a "traffic-driven" to a "user retention-oriented" approach. The digital media revolution is reshaping cultural tourism communication paradigms, compelling internet-famous cities to establish sustainable pathways between surging visitor flows and cultural accumulation. Existing research primarily focuses on formation mechanisms of internet-famous cities, communication logic, cultural memory construction, and sustainable development strategies (Fan Rong, Tian Ye, 2025). These strategies help build long-term resilient ceramic cultural and creative industry clusters centered on identity recognition. However, current studies predominantly examine macro-level industrial development, cultural heritage preservation, and urban renewal, rarely revealing how governance constraints influence micro-level mechanisms driving industry transitions from traffic-driven to user retention models. This study uses Jingdezhen's ceramic cultural and creative industry as a case study to systematically explore the practical impact of governance constraints on "traffic-to-

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retention conversion," filling gaps in micro-level mechanism and contextual research within cultural governance studies. By shifting the research perspective from macro policies to governance-driven practices, this study reveals Jingdezhen's sustainable development strategy for overcoming short-term traffic dependency and achieving long-term user retention. The findings provide theoretical support and practical references for heritage city governance and industrial upgrading.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts an industrial evolution-centered theoretical framework to analyze the operational mechanisms and practical pathways for upgrading the tourism industry in Jingdezhen Ceramic Cultural and Creative Cluster Zone, driven by the phenomenon of 'influencer breakout.'

The influencer economy theory posits that individuals or groups build influence through content creation, converting traffic into commercial value (traffic monetization). Within the context of short videos and self-media platforms, this theory emphasizes "community identity" and "interactive selection" mechanisms, transforming tourists from passive recipients into active participants. For Jingdezhen, this means leveraging the influencer effect to break traditional communication barriers, converting fan engagement into "check-in" behaviors and actual purchasing power, thereby injecting explosive momentum and sustained attention into industrial clusters.

The theory of cultural and creative industries posits that cultural resources must undergo creative transformation to generate high added value, with the core principle being the deep integration of "culture as foundation and creativity as nucleus." This framework emphasizes the high permeability and radiating influence of cultural industries, highlighting the immeasurable value of conceptual assets such as brand IPs. In Jingdezhen's transformation process, this requires moving beyond mere artifact production by tapping into the cultural essence of this millennium-old porcelain capital. By fostering cross-sector integration between ceramics, tourism, and technology, the city can elevate intangible assets to drive comprehensive regional competitiveness growth.

The experience economy theory posits that economic value exchange has shifted from goods and services to experiential offerings, emphasizing emotional resonance and personalized engagement during consumption. As the fourth stage of economic development following products, commodities, and services, experiences exhibit synchronization between production and consumption alongside subjective variability. This theory advocates for Jingdezhen to move beyond single-dimensional sightseeing models by creating immersive and interactive cultural tourism scenarios. Through hands-on participation in activities like pottery shaping, glazing, and firing, visitors can develop unique memories, thereby enhancing brand loyalty and repeat visit rates.

These perspectives collectively demonstrate how the "internet celebrity economy" serves as a catalyst to activate the core of "cultural creativity," ultimately driving the transformation and upgrading of Jingdezhen's tourism industry through the implementation model of "experience economy." Together, these theories form a dynamic analytical framework: internet celebrity traffic acts as the gateway, cultural creativity constitutes the essence, immersive experiences serve as the vehicle, and industrial upgrading represents the ultimate goal. This framework not only elucidates the intrinsic logic behind Jingdezhen's current development but also provides strategic guidance for addressing homogenized competition and deepening industry integration, facilitating its transition from a "social media hotspot" to a "world-class ceramic cultural tourism destination."

3. Impact Analysis of "Internet Celebrity Outbreak" on the Tourism Industry in Jingdezhen Ceramic Cultural and Creative Agglomeration Zone

3.1 Enhancing the Brand Influence of Jingdezhen as a Tourist Destination

Firstly, new media dissemination has significantly expanded brand reach. Through digital platforms like short videos, live streaming, and content-driven recommendations, Jingdezhen's urban image and ceramic culture have resonated strongly with younger demographics. On major social media platforms, trending topics such as "Jingdezhen Check-in" and "Taohuichuan Night Market" continue to gain popularity, with views reaching hundreds of millions and directly driving explosive growth in visitor numbers. In recent years, Jingdezhen has consistently set new records for holiday tourist arrivals, demonstrating remarkable effectiveness in converting traffic into lasting engagement.

Secondly, international communication has become a pivotal driver for brand upgrading. Jingdezhen actively leverages digital tools to promote cultural globalization, utilizing panoramic live broadcasts and international social media engagement to showcase ceramic experiences on a global scale. A series of high-profile international cultural exchange events, coupled with spontaneous coverage by overseas media, have enabled Jingdezhen to successfully transition from its traditional identity as a "Millennium Porcelain Capital" into a modern cultural brand with contemporary aesthetic appeal across diverse linguistic contexts.

3.2 Attracting Young Tourist Demographics and Promoting Tourism Consumption Upgrading

First, the younger tourist demographic's preference for immersive experiences and social sharing has fundamentally reshaped Jingdezhen's tourism market structure. Data reveals that Generation Z and Millennials have become the dominant force in Jingdezhen's tourism sector. These travelers are no longer satisfied with traditional sightseeing tours; they increasingly seek cultural tourism experiences characterized by strong interactivity, visually appealing designs, and shareable elements. This trend has directly fueled the rise of integrated models combining ceramics, cultural creativity, and night markets.

Secondly, influencer-driven content has facilitated the refinement of tourism scenarios and service upgrades. In 2023, government-led quality enhancement initiatives at core scenic spots stimulated consumption recovery, attracting 58.96 million visitors and generating 70.914 billion yuan in tourism revenue, representing year-on-year growth rates of 32.01% and 95.38% respectively – the highest figures in recent years. The 2024 season saw visitor numbers surge to 65.03 million with revenue climbing to 75.3 billion yuan (Table 1). This sustained consumption momentum has laid solid foundations for high-quality tourism development. Taking Taoxichuan cultural clusters as an example, activities like "nighttime pottery wheel sessions," "ceramic blind box markets," and "artist residency programs" have become viral social media attractions. These immersive experiences not only extend visitor stays but also effectively boost nighttime accommodation, dining, and peripheral consumption, achieving a profound transformation from "transit tourism" to "overnight tourism."

Table 1: Tourism Data in the Last 5 Years

Year	Number of visitors (in ten thousand)	Visitor growth rate (%)	Total Tourism Revenue (Billion Yuan)	Tourism revenue growth rate (%)
2020	2247.45	-59.21	363.39	-49.16
2021	5331.65	137.23	479.44	31.94
2022	4466.69	-16.22	362.96	-24.30
2023	5896.35	32.01	709.14	95.38
2024	6503.67	10.30	753	6.18

4. Problems in Quality Improvement and Upgrading of Tourism Industry in Jingdezhen Ceramic Cultural and Creative Agglomeration Area under the Influence of "Internet Celebrity Outbreak"

4.1 Flow Dependence Syndrome and Insufficient Endogenous Driving Force for Industrial Innovation

Firstly, traffic-driven strategies have caused industrial development to deviate from long-termism and cultural depth cultivation. Between 2022 and 2024, core districts like Taoxichuan and Sanbao Village rapidly gained popularity through short-video platforms, attracting large numbers of "check-in tourists." However, some operators pursued short-term hype by replicating formulaic landscape installations and flash events. This approach resulted in a lack of originality in cultural and creative products and diluted regional cultural essence. For instance, the market frequently saw imitation "hit" derivatives (such as zodiac-themed ceramic cups), sparking consumer doubts about product authenticity and cultural value while eroding brand uniqueness.

Secondly, "traffic anxiety" undermines the sustainable development capacity of industrial clusters. Take Sculpture Porcelain Factory as an example: despite initial high visibility that attracted significant attention, the lack of continuous content updates and R&D support has led to declining visitor return rates and corporate retention rates. Some ceramic workshops originally focused on original designs have been forced to transition into mere "photo backdrop setups" or fast-moving consumer goods retail outlets under survival pressures. This transformation has resulted in weakened brand cultural appeal and difficulty in sustaining long-term market competitiveness.

4.2 Superficial Spatial Experience and Low Degree of Industry Convergence

Firstly, the lack of spatial interactivity fails to meet tourists' needs for immersive cultural engagement. Taking Taoxichuan as an example, despite its unique industrial heritage and artistic ambiance, existing business formats remain concentrated on superficial consumption activities such as exhibitions, catering services, and bookstores, lacking in-depth craft experiences like pottery shaping, glazing, and firing techniques. Research indicates that most visitors spend short durations, with their touring patterns limited to the fast-paced "photography + shopping" routine, resulting in superficial understanding of ceramic art. The absence of professional guided tours and interactive facilities further restricts the depth of cultural dissemination.

Secondly, the spatial functions remain singular, with a lack of systematic narrative in business format integration. Although industrial parks like Sculpture Porcelain Factory have gathered numerous workshops, the absence of effective coordination mechanisms and unified cultural narratives among different business formats hinders visitors from forming a complete immersive cultural experience. Some newly developed districts (such as Dongshi Ceramic Culture Street) have

introduced visual innovations, but their excessive focus on creating "internet-famous scenes" while neglecting knowledge dissemination and systematic interpretation has resulted in visitors experiencing "more spectacle than substance" – they see the hype but grasp little of the deeper cultural significance.

4.3 Lagging Digital Transformation and Absence of Digital Industrial Ecosystem

First, the construction of digital infrastructure lags behind, and the connection between online and offline services is not smooth. Although core venues such as the China Ceramic Museum have rich collection resources, their digital tour systems are updated slowly, and the application coverage of immersive interactive technologies like AR/VR is limited, resulting in low visitor utilization rates. In addition, in Taoxichuan Night Market and various cultural and creative markets, a large number of merchants have not yet connected to a unified online booking, payment, and logistics system, leading to poor experiences for visitors during the purchasing, payment, and after-sales stages, which affects overall satisfaction.

Secondly, inadequate capabilities in data mining and precision marketing have constrained user engagement management and product optimization. Despite sustained growth in tourist numbers within the cluster area, the absence of a unified big data platform for visitor analytics and refined user profiling systems has led to resource allocation imbalances, creating a disconnect between cultural and creative product supply and market demand. For instance, certain digital exhibition events suffered from low conversion rates and subpar marketing outcomes due to inaccurate audience targeting strategies.

5. Exploration of Tourism Industry Transformation and Upgrading Path for Jingdezhen Ceramic Cultural and Creative Agglomeration Zone under the Background of "Internet Celebrity Outbreak"

5.1 Creating Super IPs with Cultural Depth and Communication Matrix

First, refine core cultural symbols to create highly recognizable IPs. By exploring Jingdezhen's millennia-old porcelain heritage, extract visual elements from signature styles like blue-and-white porcelain, delicate lacework, and famille rose, and develop anime-inspired IP characters that blend traditional charm with modern aesthetics. These characters will be inspired by historical figures like Tang Ying and Cheng Men. Through comprehensive storytelling and multi-scenario applications (including memes, virtual avatars, and merchandise), we'll transform traditional culture into "visual presentations, shareable content, and consumable products" to enhance brand loyalty and viral potential. Second, establish a multi-layered content distribution network. Leveraging short-video platforms, we'll launch themed series like "Craftsmen's Day" and "Unveiling the Porcelain Capital," creating a full-spectrum approach from in-depth analysis to light-hearted entertainment. Deepen collaborations with national heritage sites like Taoxichuan and the Imperial Kiln Factory, inviting top influencers and local creators to host immersive check-in experiences that amplify their fanbase for exponential growth. Simultaneously, implement UGC (User-Generated Content) incentives through challenges like short-video contests and photography exhibitions to spark community engagement.

5.2 Establishing a Differentiated and Hierarchical Tourism Product Innovation System

First, develop specialized product lines for niche markets. Customize diversified product portfolios to meet the needs of different customer groups: launch lightweight daily-use ceramics and trendy accessories for younger demographics; create "ceramic-tea integrated" sets and customized souvenirs for the cultural tourism market; offer limited-edition artistic ceramics and bespoke services for high-end collectors. Establish "cultural innovation incubation workshops" in locations such as sculpture ceramic factories and Sanbao Village, implementing the "one village, one product; one factory, one strategy" model to encourage collaboration between artisans and independent designers. Second, promote cross-sector innovation through "ceramics+". Set up a "Ceramics and Design Joint Innovation Center" to leverage resources from institutions like Tsinghua University Academy of Arts and China Academy of Art, fostering deep integration between ceramics and fashion, illustration, and trendy toys. Explore new forms of "ceramics + digital technology," developing innovative cultural products such as AR-pattern-changing ceramics and light-sound interactive porcelain vases to infuse traditional craftsmanship with digital appeal.

5.3 Optimizing the Cultural and Creative Tourism Spatial Experience System

First, we will restructure the spatial functional layout for "industry-tourism integration." Leveraging core areas like Taoxichuan and Sculpture Porcelain Factory, we will establish a "one-core multi-zone" spatial framework. While showcasing ceramic culture as the core attraction, we will strategically integrate diverse business formats including dining, retail, workshops, and performances to optimize visitor flow. The dual-time operation model of "daytime pottery-making experiences + nighttime light-themed markets" will be promoted to meet round-the-clock consumer demands. Second, we will establish a professional tourism service standard system. The "Jingdezhen Cultural and Creative Industry Cluster Operation Management Guidelines" will be formulated to clarify service procedures, exhibition standards, and safety protocols. The "Cultural Tourism Service Officer" system will be implemented, forming service teams comprising professional guides, ceramic consultants, and volunteers. Third-party agencies will be engaged for performance evaluations to continuously improve service quality.

5.4 Enhancing Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Experiences

First, develop highly interactive craft heritage programs. Establish initiatives like "Master Craftsmen Live Demonstrations" and "One-Day Apprenticeship" at sites such as the Imperial Kiln Factory and Changnanli, inviting heritage inheritors to conduct live workshops. Create family-friendly programs including "Clay Modeling Camps for Families" and "Ceramic Art Therapy Classes" tailored for mid-to-high-end clientele to meet diverse experiential needs. Second, develop immersive digital cultural spaces. Utilize holographic projection and MR mixed reality technologies to create themed exhibitions like "A Journey through Millennia of Porcelain Making" in museums and urban districts. Through light-and-shadow theater and audio interactions, vividly recreate the four core techniques of "forming, repairing, firing, and painting" to enhance educational engagement and entertainment value.

6. CONCLUSION

Against the backdrop of internet celebrities breaking into mainstream culture, Jingdezhen Ceramic Cultural and Creative Cluster has implemented differentiated upgrading strategies tailored to different developmental stages. This targeted approach effectively revitalizes industrial vitality and attracts younger demographics. Applying traffic economy theory to traditional cultural tourism transformation holds practical significance, yet current implementations still face challenges such as brand homogenization and innovation stagnation. Based on industry realities, this study analyzes opportunities and bottlenecks in Jingdezhen's tourism development under influencer effects, proposing optimization pathways through three dimensions: product innovation design, digital marketing systems, and cross-sector integration ecosystems. As an emerging field in cultural-tourism integration, this research represents preliminary exploration aiming to facilitate future in-depth studies. Future investigations could employ empirical surveys and data modeling methods to systematically examine diverse visitor groups' deeper expectations regarding ceramic cultural experiences, thereby formulating targeted measures for sustainable high-quality industrial development.

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