

MiHoYo Case Study--Taking Development of Genshin Impact

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Abstract. Game is a modern new art, as a global characteristic cultural language and a new type of cultural carrier. Cultural export is an important strategy aimed at strengthening a country's image, attracting international attention, and promoting cultural exchanges by disseminating a country's cultural values, art forms, and ideas. The core of this strategy is to promote the country's unique cultural elements to the international stage through various media and channels, thereby promoting a more comprehensive and positive understanding of the country on a global scale. This study explores the impact of cultural output on the development of the video game industry by taking Shanghai MiHoYo Network Technology Co. It summarizes the role of cultural output in its brand strategy and analyzes the cultural communication strategy it adopts. The results of the study show that cultural output as a branding strategy brings great advantages to the development of electronic games and enhances the competitiveness of the industry.

Keywords: Strategy, cultural output, MiHoYo.

1. Introduction

Through cultural export, a country can not only create a positive image, but also establish interpersonal connections, deepen diplomatic relations, and promote a deeper understanding and acceptance of its unique cultural traditions by the international community. Cultural export is not only a means to enhance soft power, but also a bridge to promote international cooperation, understanding, and peace, laying a solid foundation for building a more diverse, inclusive, and interconnected world. For the video game industry, the ability to make a game appealing to consumers is the first step toward success, as it lays the groundwork for a game that will continue to be profitable for the company. However, many of today's attempts at branding strategies have come to naught. This thesis will take Shanghai MiHoYo Network Technology as an example to analyze the strategies it has adopted in cultural communication and summarize the benefits its strategies have brought and the competitiveness its branding strategies have brought to the video game industry.

2. Network Effects from Content Outputs

As early as August, MiHoYo was selected as one of the key national cultural export enterprises and projects for 2023-2024 by the Department of Trade in Services of the Ministry of Commerce. In the final analysis, the reason why the original God's cultural exportation has been able to catch fire all over the world does not depend on top-down publicity. Spreading the word relies on the excellent quality of the game and the cultural values attached to it so that everyone can feel the cultural influence of the game and be spontaneously attracted by it. Liu Wei, who is one of the founders of MiHoYo, said that young people nowadays live in the age of information explosion and only high-quality content products can attract their attention, "We use IP thinking to tell China's story, essentially to make the traditional art style conform to the aesthetics of contemporary people, retain the cultural core on the premise of telling popular stories, which can connect with the tradition, but also project the reality. IP characters created with such thinking are more vital." [1]. With cultural innovation as the core driver, MiHoYo has successfully created a window for global players to

understand China through its original IP and innovative marketing strategies. It can be said that while promoting culture, there has also been a wave of marketing.

MiHoYo makes full use of global hot events, festivals, and other opportunities to customize and launch highly targeted game content, which increases the attractiveness of the product. For example, in the sea lantern festival activities of "Original God" in "Li Yue", players can make and release the sky lanterns to guide the spirits of the dead warriors to return home, and burn firecrackers and hang lanterns to reunite with their relatives and friends, which are like a combination of the traditional Chinese Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival. To a certain extent, players can understand the traditional Chinese festival culture [2]. The game is not just a simple entertainment experience for players, it is more like a platform to tell their own stories. In the game, players can feel all kinds of situations they can experience in the real world, thus creating a strong sense of empathy and immersion. This feeling is like finding the real self in the virtual world, which intoxicates people. Culture is born from this kind of environment, using cultural output to feed the marketing content, MiHoYo has made a good example for other game companies. MiHoYo's "Wipeout: Star Dome Railroad" was launched on April 26, topping China's iOS best-seller list on the first day, and ranking among the top three in revenue for several consecutive days in the U.S., Japan, South Korea, and other popular markets. This time, it was ranked No. 7 on the revenue chart and topped the growth and download charts.

Wisdom Finance learned that on September 13, Sensor Tower issued an article detailing the changes in China's handheld game products' revenue and download volume charts in overseas markets in August 2023. Sensor Tower pointed out that, with the launch of the new card pool Kafka, MiHoYo's "Wrecking - Star Dome Railway" saw a new high in global one-day water flow on August 9th. As a company regarding anime and games, from the initial relatively exposed character design to the current positioning for more gaming public MiHoYo may have sacrificed some of the players and gaming experience. In today's era, both companies and individuals, have strong national attributes and values of the attributes, especially the company, not just business is so simple, especially the content output of the company, but also need to assume more social responsibility.

3. Cultural Export Strategy

At this stage, many manufacturers have made attempts at cultural output, but most of them have only stayed on the surface, the first step of cultural output, that is, the output of cultural symbols. For example, an irrelevant game character suddenly made a set of ancient costumes, which looks like the promotion of Chinese characteristics of culture the effect is very little. For example, the well-known movie Kung Fu Panda, on the surface is out of Chinese culture, but it is still only the fruit of Chinese cultural symbols. The second level of cultural export is the export of cultural products. A good example is the Japanese cultural industry, especially in the manga industry. Drawing, animation, and games. Up to this point, the export of cultural products like Japan's has been successful, with a mature business model, and strong cultural elements, and no matter what the core idea is, it has made a lot of money. However, there is still a gap between "making money" and what we expect from cultural exports.

There is another layer of cultural export, the export of cultural consciousness. The moral judgments that we are subconsciously influenced in our lives are due to the cultural works that we are exposed to in our lives. What game companies need to do is to "go inward", rather than relying on a layer of cultural symbols. Taking the approach of MiHoYo as an example, it has improved itself in two aspects. The first is "content" and the second is technology. In 2014, after the development of MiHoYo's Wipeout Academy 2, they made it clear that it would be a content game. Although there is no innovation in the iteration of the core game playing, the content is not limited to the text, but more in the art and technology to improve productivity. Technically, one in large-scale collaboration technology, Scale is getting bigger and bigger enterprises how to improve productivity under the premise of quality assurance is always plagued by many companies, and MiHoYo overseas market is

also very successful, multinational synergy appears to be more important. Two in the innovative technology, MiHoYo put forward to not let the technology backward, drag the realization of the collapse of God's domain, so to go to solve the technical problems. In 2017, MiHoYo's "Original God" project was established. At the beginning of the project, MiHoYo set the tone of making technological breakthroughs and technological innovation. To make the world in "Original God" more vital, all the character modeling, character movements, and over-the-counter animations in the game have been subjected to real-life dynamic capture, so that in different states, the characters' expression changes and physical movements have rich, dynamic details. With the high-quality graphics and comprehensive motion capture technology in the product, the grand vision of "Original God" has come to fruition.

The technological breakthroughs of The Original God do not stop at exquisite visual effects. With the public beta test of "Cloud - Original God", MiHoYo, through the means of cloud computing technology, allows the game's computing to take place in the cloud, detaching itself from the host's limitations, so long as there is a screen, it can experience the game to achieve the ultimate experience of low-cost, high reproduction and high fluency. At the same time, relying on independent research and development, "Original God" took the lead in realizing the interoperability of multi-platform data of game products, users can play on cell phones, computers, game consoles, and other devices, while game content and data can be interoperable.

As a high-tech enterprise with technology as its foundation, since its establishment, MiHoYo has focused on the development and application of computer graphics, intelligent tool platforms, and other information technology fields, and is gradually at the top of the domestic and international leading level at the 3D rendering engine, cloud gaming technology, machine learning, and other aspects. Up to now, the relevant technologies have been applied to several technical fields such as film and television animation effects, interactive program development, AI voice generation, etc., initially realizing the industrialized production and intelligent manufacturing of cultural products, and actively laying out the meta-universe industry [3]. No matter what kind of cultural export, we still have to fall on the issue of "practicality". If the game itself is not fun, no matter how many cultural elements are incorporated, the purpose of export will not be achieved. From this point of view, it is truly relevant to work on the game's technology and content.

4. Cultural Communication Strategies Adopted by MiHoYo

4.1. Coordinated Strategy

The game background design of "Original God" is inspired by the different styles and cultures of real life, which constitutes a fantasy world with seven different kingdoms. MiHoYo currently has nearly 200 employees, with an average age of 29, of which employees aged 25-30 account for 80% of its total employees. MiHoYo also uses familiarity with the two-dimensional culture as a criterion for recruitment, thus creating a team with a high sense of cultural identity [4]. After fully understanding the national cultures of different places, the seven kingdoms were designed and created. For example, the first two kingdoms opened on the game, "Liyue" and "Mund", correspond to ancient China and medieval Europe respectively, and the subsequent openings, "Sumeru", are the most important ones. The subsequent opening of "Sumeru" is integrated with the culture of Arabia, Egypt, and other countries. Take the Japanese market as an example, to successfully enter the Japanese market, in addition to providing complete Japanese game text and Japanese character dubbing, based on the open game settings, MiHoYo is based on traditional Chinese culture to a certain extent, fused with the Japanese characteristics of culture, and then design a unique storyline and a specific game character. For example, "Inazuma" is a country modeled after Japan, with its basic national conditions and character design heavily referencing Japan in the late Edo period, allowing Japanese audiences to have a more immersive game experience.

In addition, "Original God" specially invited the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, the oldest symphony orchestra in Japan, and Japan's top folk musicians to use traditional folk music instruments

familiar to the Japanese people, such as shamisen, shakuhachi, koto, etc. to perform the music and use it in the background music of the game. This approach not only fully respects Japan's local cultural traditions, but also demonstrates China's tolerance of the value of "beauty for all, beauty for all".

4.2. Advocacy-based Strategies

In terms of volume buying, MiHoYo puts a lot of material advertisements on Google Play; it also keeps on publicizing and promoting in overseas social media, and MiHoYo makes full use of its unique overseas community, App HoYoLAB, to ensure the frequency of updates and the quality of content while encouraging players and fans to create game content, to attract more players to join the game.

In addition, MiHoYo has not slackened its offline localization promotion. For example, at the beginning of this year, MiHoYo held an offline art exhibition in Paris with the theme of "The Original God"; and after the launch of "Star Dome", it even held the "Star Dome Train, Global Tour" in more than 20 countries around the world. After the launch of "Star Dome", the company even organized the "Star Dome Train, Global Tour" offline promotional activities in more than 20 countries around the world, which attracted countless overseas players to come and watch. In Akihabara, Japan, the large billboards of MiHY's game IPs can be seen everywhere, and you can see MiHY's elements in Akihabara Building No. 1 and the West Plaza street outside the exit of the Electric City, where columns with advertisements for Star Dome are lined up, which is why this street is called "Star Dome Street" by the public. This is why it is also popularly known as "Star Dome Street". At the just-concluded Cologne Game Show in Germany, MiHoYo 's booth also revealed the PV and brand new information about the new game "Zero Zone", and MiHoYo also invited a famous local band to perform live! Songs from its games, such as Hara Kami, have attracted the attention of a large number of players overseas.

4.3. Collaborative Strategy

Japan's game industry chain is very developed, and it is the norm in the industry for game IPs to link up with various offline shopping centers. While actively improving the quality of game products, MiHoYo has also further strengthened its cooperation with friendly companies, announcing cooperation with Sony and Nintendo in 2019 after the first round of beta testing of The Original God, announcing that the game will be realized on multiple platforms. The game is available online, including on PS4 and Switch platforms. Following the game's official launch, Miha Tour has also partnered with Japan's local firms. Several companies have partnered to further enhance the appeal of the game's IP by organizing events and selling merchandise at stores such as Rosen convenience stores, Sweet Paradise coffee shop chains, and Gigo stores. In the future, MiHoYo will continue to promote the research and development of game products and improve the original IP ecosystem. Based on core IPs such as "Honkai", "Genshin Impact" and "Undecided Event Book", there will be more original IPs, novels, comics, animations, games, and peripheral products to meet users one after another. At the same time, MiHoYo 's products will continue to be promoted to all parts of the world to let the world know more about China. In addition, MiHoYo is building a highland for China's cultural and creative talents, bringing together and cultivating a group of cultural and creative industry talents with creativity and international vision[5].

5. Conclusion

Miha Tour Company can significantly enhance the brand value and industry competitiveness of video games by having an effective cultural output strategy. At present, few manufacturers can make use of cultural output to promote the development of their games, the reasons are: First, only stay in the stage of cultural symbols output, only give the game edges a layer of slightly cultural color appearance, but not the game core cultural transformation. Second, there is a lack of cultural awareness output, and there is a need to increase cultural output at the value level. MiHoYo attaches

importance to the development of independent intellectual property rights, high-quality game production, the combination of cultural output and localization, as well as community building and cross-media cooperation, to occupy a place in the highly competitive game industry.

Authors Contribution

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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