

Analysis of the Marketing Strategies of Bawang Chagee from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of the rise of China-chic and the booming development of new media, the global expansion of Chinese brands has become a vital component of cultural dissemination and economic progress. The implementation of cross-cultural marketing strategies that transcend cultural boundaries not only facilitates the widespread global promotion of Chinese cultural traditions but also effectively drives the continued growth of the national economy. Taking our domestic brand Bawang Chaji as an example, it has skillfully leveraged cultural symbols, digital promotion, and cross-border collaborations to achieve the dual success of effectively exporting Chinese culture and significantly enhancing brand value. This paper aims to distill the outstanding experiences from its cross-cultural marketing practices, providing a reference for deeper integration between traditional Chinese elements and commercial brands. Ultimately, it seeks to accelerate the better and faster entry of Chinese brands onto the international stage and foster sustained friendly exchanges between China and the rest of the world.

Keywords: Chagee, Cross-cultural Marketing, Cultural Communication, Guochao Brand, Overseas Trade Conversion.

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of increasingly integrated global tea consumption, the overseas expansion of new-style Chinese tea brands represents both a market development initiative and a practical attempt to spread Eastern tea culture to the world. With its "fresh leaf milk tea" product format, Bawang Chaji closely connects the aesthetic philosophy of Chinese tea with the modern consumption environment. The cultural communication and integration methods embedded in its marketing efforts offer a representative case worthy of in-depth observation, demonstrating how Chinese culinary culture can achieve better international expression.[1]

2. The Development Status of Bawang Chaji

2.1. Band Introduction

Bawang Chaji adheres to its core mission of "Connecting global friends with Eastern tea". It is dedicated to researching innovative fresh leaf black tea and developing new products, with continuous investment in the innovative research of fresh tea leaves and black tea craftsmanship. By skillfully integrating traditional tea culture elements with modern consumer aesthetics, the brand creates tea beverages that excel in both taste and cultural connotation. While deeply cultivating the domestic market, it also actively promotes a global layout, adopting adaptable cross-cultural communication approaches to introduce Chinese tea culture to the international community. As a representative brand with a contemporary appeal, it exhibits strong cultural influence and overseas expansion capabilities.[2]

2.2. Development History

Against the backdrop of steady Chinese economic development and growing cultural confidence, Guochao (China-chic) brands have gradually become important channels for conveying Chinese culture to the world. The tea beverage industry, rich in traditional heritage, has seized a significant opportunity to go global by leveraging new retail

and new media. As an outstanding representative of domestic fresh leaf tea brands, Bawang Chaji upholds the philosophy of "Eastern tea, for global friends", seamlessly linking profound tea culture with modern consumer preferences. It has achieved rapid growth in overseas markets, making its cross-cultural marketing approach highly referenceable. Currently, many Chinese brands still face challenges internationally, such as low cultural recognition and a lack of diverse promotion methods. How to use effective cross-cultural strategies to both spread culture and win market share has become a topic of shared concern for the industry and researchers.

3. An Analysis of Bawang Chaji's Marketing Strategies from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

3.1. Cultural Inheritance and Innovation

Bawang Chaji has successfully integrated cultural inheritance and innovation in its marketing. It not only explores in-depth the artistic conceptions of classic stories like "Farewell My Concubine" and classical poetry but also extensively uses recognizable visual symbols such as Beijing Peking Opera facial masks, paper-cutting techniques, and traditional painting. Relying on its commitment to high-quality fresh-leaf tea and tea art experience activities, the brand continuously conveys the core spirit of tea ceremony and naturally integrates Chinese aesthetics into modern consumption scenarios. It has created a "New Eastern Tea House" social space that better meets the needs of young people. In overseas promotion, the brand focuses on adapting to local cultural characteristics to reduce cultural differences. It uses various methods such as short videos, cultural heritage collaborations, and popular IP linkages to accurately target young audiences, enabling traditional tea culture to continuously radiate new vitality.[3]

3.2. Digital and Social Media Marketing

Bawang Chaji has built an effective operation system in the field of digital and social media marketing. In overseas

markets, it leverages mainstream platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, implementing differentiated content strategies based on the characteristics of each platform: Facebook focuses on releasing official marketing campaign information; TikTok emphasizes the creation of interactive content, activating user-generated content (UGC) dissemination through characteristic marketing activities like the "Cup Tearing Activity", with the cumulative views of related topics exceeding 32 million. In the domestic market, it deeply cultivates platforms such as Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and Weibo, continuously outputting high-quality content such as product cultural backgrounds and intangible cultural heritage integration innovations. It also conducts marketing promotions in conjunction with hot events and accumulates user resources through channels such as online ordering systems, WeChat Work, and mini-programs. In addition, the brand incorporates localized expressions of the target market into its social media marketing, achieving the simultaneous development of cultural dissemination and user interaction, and building a digital marketing model with in-depth online-offline linkage.[4]

3.3. Cross-Border Collaborations and Diversified Experiences

In the process of international promotion, Bawang Chaji continues to adopt the co-creation and co-branding model with content IPs such as The Lost Tomb series, organically integrating Chinese tea beverages with two-dimensional and national trend elements, and further expanded its collaboration boundaries in 2025. The brand has joined hands with intangible cultural heritage techniques such as Yunnan silver-body cloisonné enamel to launch limited-edition tea beverages and immersive interactive activities, allowing foreign customers to experience the connotation of Eastern aesthetics through traditional craft symbols. On the other hand, Bawang Chaji has also collaborated with internationally influential trend IPs such as Pop Mart and Qiaogu Man to jointly expand its business in Southeast Asia. It has also promoted an innovative "tea beverage + photovoltaic" collaboration with Trina Solar, building zero-carbon stores and promoting green energy experiences. These efforts not only reduce the acceptance barriers in overseas markets through cultural integration but also respond to global consumption trends with the concept of sustainability. In terms of localization, Bawang Chaji has made distinctive attempts such as setting up the "tallest store" in Thailand and launching a "silent store" in Singapore. Coupled with its cultural co-branding with the British Library, it has gradually built a comprehensive competitiveness based on the "trinity" of "cultural resonance, experience innovation, and value recognition" overseas. It has become a distinctive reference case for Chinese tea beverages to enter the world and a differentiated benchmark for Chinese-style tea beverages going global.[5]

3.4. Emphasis on Consumer Experience

In its marketing strategy, Bawang Chaji prioritizes consumer experience, committed to creating high-quality services, a comfortable environment, and unique consumption experiences to enhance consumers' brand recognition and loyalty. To achieve this goal, Bawang Chaji has adopted a series of creative and targeted measures. For example, it has set up tea art performance areas in stores and provided free tea art courses, allowing consumers to gain a

deeper understanding of tea culture and improving the brand's reputation.[6]

3.5. Promotion of Healthy Tea Concepts

Malaysia is the world's eighth-largest consumer of sugar and one of the countries with a high obesity rate in Southeast Asia. In recent years, health risks caused by obesity in Malaysia have gradually attracted public attention. Since July 2019, the Malaysian government has imposed a "sugar tax", which has helped local consumers adjust their "sweet-loving" dietary habits to a certain extent and choose relatively healthy alternative products; on the other hand, it has also created more sustainable development opportunities for Bawang Chaji, an overseas brand, in the local market.[7]

3.6. Brand Storytelling and Emotional Connection

In international marketing, Bawang Chaji's brand narrative with "Eastern tea" as its core has formed a differentiated emotional connection advantage: it materializes the brand concept of "Connecting global friends with Eastern tea" into spatial experiences and cultural symbols. In Southeast Asia, it builds tea culture exchange scenarios through Eastern-style aesthetic stores; in Europe and America, it evokes consumers' resonance with Eastern emotional philosophy through product stories. At the same time, the brand organically integrates social responsibility practices with healthy lifestyle concepts, deepening the emotional bond it has built from cultural identity to value consensus. As a result, the "New Eastern Tea House" has achieved the internal integration of cultural core and public lifestyle in the international market.

4. Cross-Cultural Challenges Faced by Bawang Chaji's Overseas Marketing

4.1. Cultural Cognition and Communication Barriers

In the European and American markets, coffee culture has long dominated beverage consumption, shaping a beverage concept that pursues efficiency and practicality, forming a consumption concept of "efficiency, convenience, and function first"; while Chinese tea culture embodies the spiritual core of "slow life and quiet quality", which naturally conflicts with the perspectives and social norms of Western consumers. Looking at the Southeast Asian market, although it has a tea-drinking tradition similar to that of China, there are significant differences in taste preferences and social customs among different countries. If the brand simply copies domestic products or promotion methods, it will be difficult to truly integrate into the local cultural environment.[8]

4.2. Intensified Market Competition

The international tea beverage market is highly competitive. Leading brands such as Mixue Bingcheng and Heytea are accelerating their global layout. Faced with the situation where these leading brands are accelerating their overseas market expansion and competing for market share, as well as the continuous entry of local tea beverage brands further diverting customer groups, the market space faced by Bawang Chaji internationally is being significantly squeezed, and competition is becoming increasingly fierce.

4.3. Insufficient Differentiation in China-Chic Marketing

The traditional labels that Bawang Chaji relied on in the early stage are gradually losing their unique distinguishing role because their imitations are widely spread in the industry. Key elements such as product names (e.g., "Boya Juexian"), packaging designs, and store decorations with Chinese elements have been copied by many competing brands. Some competitors have even launched milk teas with similar tastes, which further blurs Bawang Chaji's unique image as a China-chic brand in the minds of consumers.[9]

5. Optimization Suggestions for Bawang Chaji's Overseas Marketing

5.1. Diversified Use of Chinese Cultural Symbols

Break the model of "single product + single cultural symbol". Incorporate story-telling and scenario-based backgrounds into products and poster designs to extend cultural connotation. Release promotional videos to create cultural scenarios that are easily perceivable by consumers from various countries, and convey the connotation of symbols through story-telling plots to arouse resonance. It is also necessary to avoid overly profound traditional cultural symbols, while integrating modern elements into traditional symbols to highlight the connotation of traditional culture in the new era.

5.2. Innovation in Cultural Dissemination Forms

Bawang Chaji can build an interactive platform around China-chic culture. Online, it can establish cultural interest groups on overseas social platforms such as Facebook, activating user participation through forms such as tea custom sharing and festival story co-creation. At the same time, it can interact deeply with consumers in the comment section, transforming one-way cultural output into two-way communication. Offline, it can launch "China-chic Tea Event Pop-ups" in core business districts, combining immersive links such as intangible cultural heritage experiences and new product tastings to allow consumers to perceive the brand's cultural core in the scenario. In this way, it can weave a dense social connection network, transforming every interactive touchpoint into an opportunity for cultural transmission and emotional connection, and promoting the brand's upgrade from product consumption to cultural experience consumption.

5.3. Building a Differentiated Competitive Advantage

Bawang Chaji should move beyond superficial imitation of China-chic symbols, dig deep into the core of Eastern tea culture, and bind intangible cultural heritage craftsmanship with exclusive cultural IPs. Through "Han and Tang Dynasty style" stores, allusive product naming, and a series of cultural marketing efforts, it can transform culture into a unique memory in consumers' minds and form an irreproducible brand temperament. In terms of products, it should adhere to the "tea-oriented" principle, lock in core scarce tea sources such as Yunnan ancient tree tea and sign exclusive

cooperation agreements, ensure stable taste with standardized processing technology, and at the same time exercise restraint in innovation, focus on the iteration and optimization of core products, and build product barriers with a unique refreshing and non-greasy taste to achieve high repurchase rates.[10]

6. Conclusion

In the process of entering the overseas market, Bawang Chaji has empowered its brand through cultural symbols, combined digital communication methods, and continuously promoted localized adaptation strategies, effectively driving the joint development of traditional Chinese culture and commercial brands, and setting a feasible example for more domestic soft brands to go global. However, the brand still needs to overcome many cross-cultural challenges in aspects such as cultural output, market competition, and local adaptation. In the future, Bawang Chaji needs to strengthen the cultivation of cross-cultural talents, further deepen localized innovation, and strike a balance between maintaining cultural characteristics and responding to market demands, so as to achieve the long-term and healthy development of its overseas business. This case also provides a valuable reference path for many Chinese brands that expect to achieve the dual goals of "cultural going global" and "brand going global" through cross-cultural marketing.

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