

# Construction of Brand Symbol Systems and Regional Revitalization Strategies from the Perspective of Design Studies: A Case Study of the "Warm City, Diverse Flavors" Cultural Brand in Ordos

Chang Yuan

Tianjin Polytechnic University, Tianjin 300387, China

---

**Abstract:** Under the Rural Revitalization Strategy, the construction of visual symbols and experiential design for regional cultural brands has become a critical approach to activating local economies. This study focuses on the "Warm City, Diverse Flavors" agricultural and pastoral brand in Ordos, employing design methodologies to explore innovative strategies across three dimensions: brand symbol system design, multi-sensory experience construction, and localized cultural translation. Through participatory design research, brand visual narrative analysis, and service design thinking, this research systematically deconstructs the modern translation pathways of grassland cultural symbols, establishing a three-dimensional design model comprising a "brand gene bank–visual narrative system–multi-modal interactive experience." By extracting and reinterpreting Ordos cultural prototypes and integrating composite sensory design strategies (taste–vision–touch), the study enhances cultural identity recognition. Additionally, service design thinking is applied to construct an experiential loop of "pasture–workshop–table," forming a sustainable brand value-added pathway. The proposed "Five-Step Cultural Symbol Translation Method" and "Brand Experience Pyramid Model" provide replicable design paradigms for similar regional cultural brands, offering methodological innovations with practical value for design-driven rural revitalization.

**Keywords:** Brand symbol system design; experience design; localized design strategies; visual narrative; cultural translation; service design thinking.

---

## 1. Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background and Significance

The Rural Revitalization Strategy, proposed by the Chinese government to address agricultural, rural, and farmer-related challenges, emphasizes the fundamental role of rural development in national governance. [1]. The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China explicitly states that issues related to agriculture, rural areas, and farmers constitute a fundamental matter concerning the national economy and people's livelihood. Resolving the "Three Rural Issues" must consistently remain the top priority of the entire Party's work. Within this framework, the development of regional public brands is regarded as a critical pathway for advancing rural revitalization and achieving agricultural modernization. As a key city in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Ordos City possesses unparalleled natural resources and a rich cultural heritage. Although its agricultural and pastoral industries account for a relatively small proportion of the total economy, they hold immense development potential and unique geographical-cultural advantages. Therefore, investigating the construction of the regional public brand "Warm City, Diverse Flavors" and its role in rural revitalization carries significant theoretical and practical implications for Ordos and other similar regions nationwide.

Research findings reveal that despite Ordos' abundant agricultural and pastoral resources, its related industries face challenges including industrial fragmentation, insufficient industrial chain extension, and inadequate inter-county coordination. Industrial fragmentation hinders the formation of economies of scale, while the low degree of deep

processing results in limited product value-added. Furthermore, insufficient coordination among county-level brands constrains the shaping and promotion of a unified brand identity. Against this backdrop, this study focuses on systematically examining the integration of regional branding with rural revitalization, aiming to propose targeted development strategies.

### 1.2. Research Purpose and Questions

This study aims to systematically investigate the driving mechanisms of brand-oriented strategies in integrating agricultural and pastoral resources and promoting rural revitalization through the case study of the regional public brand "Nuan Cheng Duo Wei" (Warm City, Diverse Flavors). From an interdisciplinary perspective of design studies and sociology, a mixed-methods research approach is adopted, combining literature analysis, web data mining, and field research. This approach integrates on-site interviews and participatory observations across seven banners/counties in Ordos to achieve triangulation of data [7]. The study focuses on three core questions: 1. How can the reconstruction of brand symbol systems achieve value enhancement and market breakthroughs for agricultural and pastoral products? 2. In the context of rural revitalization, how should regional brands establish a dynamic equilibrium mechanism balancing "culture-economy-ecology"? 3. Against the backdrop of the digital era, how can brand experience design respond to the perceptual paradigm shifts of Generation Z consumers? Ultimately, the research seeks to construct a trinity theoretical model integrating "brand strategy, industrial ecology, and sustainable dynamics." This model aims to provide systematic solutions for similar regional public brands, spanning from cultural translation to commercial

transformation, while revealing the inherent logic and practical pathways of design-driven rural revitalization [5].

## **2. Chapter 2: Definitions of Related Concepts and Analysis of Brand Background**

### **2.1. Regional Culture**

Regional culture refers to a cultural tradition formed gradually during the historical development of a specific geographical area, characterized by distinct regional features and uniqueness. This cultural tradition emerges from the long-term interaction between local populations and their natural and social environments through productive and daily practices [2]. It is characterized by regionality, historicity, uniqueness, and inclusiveness.

The design of the regional symbol "Warm City, Diverse Flavors" closely integrates Ordos' natural endowments (Yellow River, plateau) and humanistic traits (warmth, multiculturalism). Through multidimensional elements such as geographical symbols, colors, and graphics, it interprets the core values of "warmth" and "diversity." This approach not only enhances brand distinctiveness but also conveys Ordos' unique charm as a "City of Warmth."

### **2.2. Current Status of Rural Branding**

In recent years, with support from national policies, an increasing number of rural areas have prioritized brand development and promotion [3]. Local governments and agricultural enterprises collaborate to create regionally distinctive agricultural brands by registering trademarks, participating in exhibitions, and conducting online marketing campaigns to elevate brand visibility and reputation [4]. As consumer demand grows for healthy, green, and organic agricultural products, rural brands have gained market traction. Notable examples include "Tiansheng Yunyang" (天生云阳), a regional public agricultural brand established by Yunyang County in Chongqing, which has achieved nationwide recognition and influence [5]. The advancement of rural branding contributes to enhancing the added value of agricultural products and increasing farmers' income. Simultaneously, it drives the growth of emerging industries such as rural tourism and e-commerce, fostering new economic opportunities in rural areas. Additionally, it promotes the preservation and revitalization of traditional culture, thereby strengthening rural cultural soft power.

With the deepening of agricultural branding nationwide, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region has actively responded to national policies by vigorously developing regional public brands. The General Office of the People's Government of Inner Mongolia issued the "Three-Year Action Plan for the Construction of Regional Public Brands for Agricultural and Livestock Products (2021–2023)", aiming to cultivate over 20 regionally and internationally renowned agricultural and livestock brands by 2023. This initiative emphasizes deepening the cultural connotation of brands by integrating regional traditions and characteristics, fostering culturally rich regional public brands [8].

### **2.3. Case Study**

The Ordos Municipality launched the municipal-level regional public brand "Nuan Cheng Duo Wei" (Warm City, Multiple Flavors) [11]. This brand, jointly established by the

Ordos Municipal Committee and Municipal Government, comprehensively covers all regions, categories, and industrial chains. It serves as a unified designation for high-end ecological agricultural and livestock products in Ordos, aiming to promote the high-quality development of agriculture and animal husbandry through standardization and branding. The term "Warm City" symbolizes Ordos' identity, reflecting its warm characteristics derived from energy resources (such as cashmere, coal, and natural gas) and humanistic care. "Multiple Flavors" represents the diversified flavors of agricultural and livestock products, including beef and lamb, dairy products, almond beverages, millet, and other specialty products [9]. Through rigorous selection, authorized premium products undergo brand cultivation under "Nuan Cheng Duo Wei," guiding the transformation of Ordos' agriculture and animal husbandry from traditional production to modernized brand-oriented operations. The brand continuously strengthens market promotion and cultural development by leveraging four strategic pillars: publicity, marketing, quality assurance, and shared prosperity. These efforts enhance brand influence, drive the modernization of agricultural practices, and foster coordinated development across upstream and downstream sectors of the entire industry chain [10].

## **3. Chapter 3: Development Dilemmas of Nuancheng Duowe**

### **3.1. Low Consumer Brand Awareness and Loyalty with Weak Brand Adhesion**

As an emerging regional public brand, "Nuancheng Duowe" needs to establish brand recognition among consumers, which requires time and sustained promotional efforts. While large-scale, multi-dimensional social media campaigns have fostered basic awareness and attracted initial consumers, maintaining brand loyalty and consumption retention remains critical for long-term development. The brand currently lacks a mature loyalty cultivation mechanism and suffers from imprecise promotion strategies. For instance, flagship store operations still face issues with "inaccurate positioning of target consumer groups," resulting in the failure of differentiated marketing strategies to effectively reach core customers [13]. Literature indicates that although the brand's 2024 CCTV advertising campaign reached 390 million person-times, audience exposure frequency in North and Northeast China significantly exceeded other regions, reflecting regional communication imbalances [14].

### **3.2. Challenges in Quality Control of Authorized Products and Low Brand Trust**

Authorized products inherently face challenges such as decentralized industries, unstable production chains, high product diversity, and difficulties in quality standardization. These issues demand stringent brand management. However, literature reveals that as of early 2025, the standardization process remains in the "planning phase for timelines and roadmaps," lagging behind the pace of brand expansion [12]. This delay has led to quality inconsistencies across products from different enterprises, directly undermining consumer trust. Additionally, despite the brand's emphasis on its "high-end ecological agricultural and livestock products" positioning, a disconnect exists between the market

enthusiasm observed during 2024 exhibitions (e.g., "20+ products from 7 enterprises sold out" and "signed orders totaling 502 million CNY") and the absence of empirical consumer quality evaluation data [9]. While brand communication focuses on a "multi-angle, omnichannel promotional matrix," the lack of third-party quality certification disclosures has created a perception gap regarding product quality.

### 3.3. Pronounced Product Homogenization and Poor Brand Synergy

Inner Mongolia's various regions have actively responded to the branding trend, establishing numerous county- and municipal-level regional public brands, such as Bayannur City's "Gift of Hetao" brand, Hanggin Banner's "Tianmu Shuofang" brand, Hulunbuir City's "Hulunbuir Specialty" brand, and Xing'an League's "Origin in Xing'an" brand<sup>1^6</sup>. Under these circumstances, Ordos City must identify brand uniqueness, clarify brand positioning, cultivate its own competitive advantages, and coordinate development with regional brands. This requires mobilizing counties and districts to actively participate in the co-construction of the municipal-level brand while avoiding internal competition and resource depletion. The "Warm City, Diverse Flavors" brand in Ordos faces the following challenges in product homogenization and brand synergy:

1. Overgeneralized Authorization System Leading to Product Homogenization: As of January 2025, the brand has authorized 36 enterprises to use the regional public brand. Data shows that star products such as Albas mountain mutton and Uxin Banner fine-wool sheep account for only 16.7% of authorized products, while the remaining 83.3% are ordinary agricultural and livestock products, resulting in a homogenized product matrix characterized by a "broad base and narrow top" pyramid structure [15].

2. Ambiguous Sub-Brand Positioning Causing Internal Competition: The brand adopts a "municipal-banner + enterprise brand" synergy model. However, banner-level brands such as "Tianmu Shuofang" exhibit high similarity to the municipal-level brand in product positioning and packaging design, which may trigger internal competition [17].

3. Standardization Delays Increasing Imitation Risks: Literature indicates that only 29% of authorized enterprises adopt unified packaging and labeling, while 71% independently design their branding, leading to fragmented visual identity and creating opportunities for imitation by competitors [13].

## 4. Chapter 4: Brand Reconstruction Strategies Empowered by Regional Culture

### 4.1. Integrating Regional Cultural Elements to Reconstruct Brand Cultural Connotations

The excavation and reconstruction of Ordos' cultural genes form the foundation for reshaping the brand's cultural essence. In logo design, the multicolored "J-shaped bend" of the Yellow River serves as the core element, integrating three

symbolic color bands: sky blue, grassland green, and Yellow River water. These hues represent the fusion of nature and humanistic values, conveying the visual imagery of "warm sunlight" and symbolizing Ordos' geographical and cultural uniqueness. Inspired by natural landscapes such as grasslands, deserts, and the Yellow River, spiritual symbols like "vastness," "inclusiveness," and "vitality" are distilled and embedded into the brand's visual system. For instance, product packaging incorporates Mongolian patterns and gradient colors reminiscent of the grasslands, reflecting the cultural philosophy of harmony between heaven, earth, and humanity, thereby enhancing cultural distinctiveness.

Through deeply integrating regional cultural elements, Ordos' "Warm City Multi-flavors" has transitioned from a "local specialty" to a "cultural brand." This reconstruction transcends superficial amalgamation; it involves refining symbols, transforming values, and elevating experiences to position regional culture as the brand's "spiritual operating system." The key insight lies in identifying the "semantic interface" between traditional culture and modern lifestyles, enabling consumers to affirm cultural identity and pursue spiritual belonging through product purchases, thereby achieving the reconstruction of brand cultural connotations.

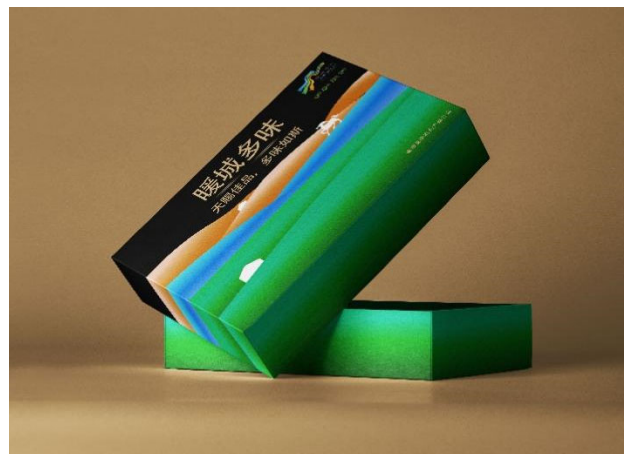


Figure 1. Packaging optimization design 1

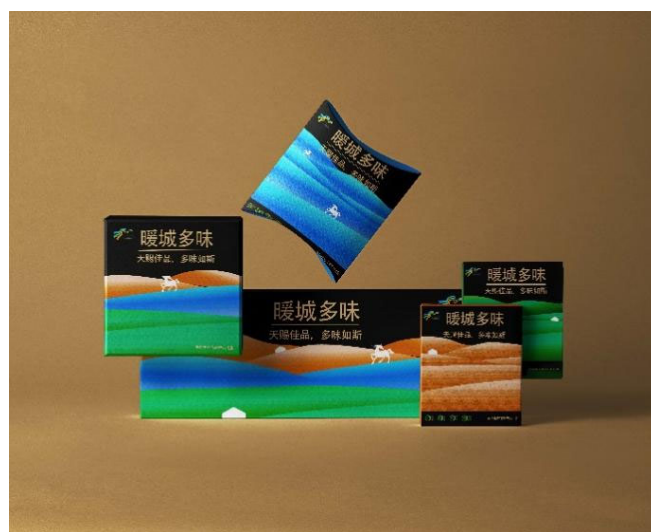


Figure 2. Packaging optimization design 2

**Table 1. ICONS of Ordos cultural symbols**

| Category                 | Symbol                         | Cultural Significance                                                                                                                                                                       | Picture examples                                                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Natural Landscapes       | Yellow River's "J-shaped Bend" | Represents ecological and cultural symbiosis.                                                                                                                                               |    |
|                          | Hongshan Jade Dragon           | The spiritual symbol that embodies the struggle and symbiosis between man and nature has been given the ecological governance significance of "desert into oasis".                          |    |
|                          | Ordos grassland                | The core carrier of grassland culture, carrying nomadic lifestyle and ecological wisdom, is a concrete expression of "vast" and "vitality".                                                 |    |
| Historical Heritage      | Hongshan Jade Dragon           | Symbolizes Ordos' role in ancient Silk Road civilizations.                                                                                                                                  |    |
| Industrial Symbols       | Cashmere, Wind Energy          | Embodies traditional and modern economic pillars.                                                                                                                                           |   |
|                          | Ordos wedding                  | It is a folk custom complex integrating song and dance, dress and etiquette, and a national intangible heritage, showing the social structure and ethical concepts of the Mongolian people. |  |
| Regional industry symbol | cashmere                       | It symbolizes the origin and development of Ordos cashmere industry                                                                                                                         |  |
|                          | wind electricity               | It symbolizes the development of new energy and clean energy in Ordos                                                                                                                       |  |

#### 4.2. Using Storytelling to Forge Emotional Connections and Leverage User Emotional Value

Brands continuously deepen their emotional connection with users by persistently narrating cultural stories and

promoting user participation, thereby further enhancing brand value and user loyalty. Through various formats such as documentaries, short videos, and social media, the brand of Ordos persistently narrates the regional cultural stories of Ordos, thereby deepening the emotional connection with users. Additionally, the brand involves users in the storytelling process by allowing them to become part of the

narrative. For example, the brand develops experience bases and organizes a series of experiential activities such as fishing, catching fish, and eating fish. It also plans travel routes, encourages user participation in traditional handicraft making, and promotes the tasting of local delicacies, thereby enhancing users' emotional experiences and brand loyalty. The brand elevates its products from functional attributes to emotional consumption, thereby leveraging users' emotional value.

### 4.3. Refining Cultural Value Communication and Clarifying the Core Brand Value System

The “Warm City, Multiple Flavors” brand of Ordos is rooted in regional culture and shapes a unique brand image by refining cultural values and constructing a core value system. This strategy hierarchically expresses core values: on one hand, it emphasizes the local expression of visual and experiential aspects through cultural situational communication, such as exhibitions and live broadcasts. For example, through events like the Beijing press conference, Shanghai Brand Day, and the Cultural Industry Expo, cultural symbols are conveyed through forms such as intangible cultural heritage performances and Ulan Muerqi song and dance. On the other hand, product naming directly evokes cultural memories; for instance, “Grassland Herding Stew Cubes” highlights the tradition of grassland herding, while “Plateau Almond Milk” is associated with the story of desertification control, endowing products with cultural memory points. This approach stimulates users' localized value resonance and establishes an emotional connection with consumers. The spiritual identification with cultural identity transforms “resources” into “values” and elevates “background” to “soul” in market competition. [9].

### 4.4. Integrating Digital Technology to Innovate Brand Communication Channels

In the digital economy era, the “Warm City, Multiple Flavors” brand of Ordos has achieved a breakthrough in the spatiotemporal limitations of traditional regional cultural communication by deeply integrating digital technology. This integration reconstructs the brand communication chain in a more interactive, immersive, and precise manner, realizing the upgrade goals of “digital expression of cultural genes, situational connection of user relationships, and exponential growth of communication effectiveness.” The core of this strategy lies in transforming the warmth of grassland culture into the granularity of digital technology.

## 5. Chapter 5 Research Reflections

The brand-building model of “Warm City, Multiple Flavors” has demonstrated its innovativeness and systematic approach during implementation, yet it also provides room for reflection and future prospects. First, the success of the brand largely depends on the in-depth exploration and effective communication of regional characteristics. This requires brand managers to continuously conduct market research and consumer preference analysis to ensure the accuracy and attractiveness of brand positioning. Second, the integration of resources in the brand-building process, especially for the fragmented agricultural and pastoral industries, necessitates more efficient coordination and management mechanisms to form a unified and powerful brand promotion. Moreover,

potential challenges such as legal restrictions, funding requirements, and shortages of technology and talent must be addressed through policy support, financial mobilization, and talent cultivation.

The “Warm City, Multiple Flavors” brand should further strengthen brand protection by employing legal means to safeguard its rights and interests. Continuous innovation is also essential to adapt to market changes and maintain competitiveness. The brand can optimize supply chain management and market strategies through digital means, such as big data analysis and cloud computing, thereby improving operational efficiency. Additionally, the brand should focus on social responsibility by engaging in sustainable development practices to enhance its image. Finally, the brand should enhance cooperation with local governments and relevant departments to secure more policy and financial support, jointly promoting regional economic development and rural revitalization.

## References

- [1] Zhu Xiaoyu, Zhang Jiangu. A Study on the Strategies of Digital Empowerment for Rural Cultural Revitalization under the Rural Revitalization Strategy [J]. Shanxi Agricultural Economics, 2025, (03): 75-78. DOI: 10.16675/j.cnki.cn14-1065/f.2025.03.023.
- [2] Sun Lihui, Bi Nan, Li Yang, et al. An Analysis of the Research Progress of Place Branding Theory Abroad [J]. Foreign Economics & Management, 2009, 31(2): 40–49.
- [3] Zhen Jingyi. Place Branding Has Become an Important Symbol of Regional Economic Vitality [N]. China Development and Reform News, 2023-05-12 (03).
- [4] Zhen Jingyi. Transforming "Local Characteristics" into "Urban Business Cards": Regional Brands Stand Out [N]. China Economic Herald, 2023-05-12 (A02).
- [5] Yunyang Micro Release. "The Mighty Yangtze River, Yunyang by Nature" – What Does "By Nature" Mean? [EB/OL]. (2024-07-09) [2025-02-18]. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/BxY419ja5nOEkp-v-369wQ>
- [6] Yang Xueyan. Developing a Modern Agricultural Social Service System through Branding [J]. Science & Technology Information, 2019, 17(15): 216-217+220. DOI: 10.16661/j.cnki.1672-3791.2019.15.216.
- [7] Hua Bing. Developing Brand Agriculture to Support Rural Revitalization [J]. Fujian Tea, 2019, 41(07): 57-58.
- [8] Dong Min. A Study on the Impact of Regional Public Brand Construction of Agricultural Products on Rural Revitalization [D]. Inner Mongolia University of Finance and Economics, 2023. DOI: 10.27797/d.cnki.gnmgc.2023.000150.
- [9] People's Daily Online. Liu Yilin. Exclusive Interview with Wang Yufei: Sharing the Flavor of the Prairie and Feeling the Warmth of the City [EB/OL]. (2024-06-28) [2025-02-18]. <http://nm.people.com.cn/n2/2024/0709/c196689-40822328.html>
- [10] Mangzhong Brand Think Tank. The Launch of the "Warm City, Multiple Flavors" Regional Public Brand of Ordos in Beijing [EB/OL]. (2024-06-28) [2025-02-18]. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/ixyQI4kAnTC8eSthxRNlg>
- [11] Chen Lingyu. Night Reading | The "Multiple Flavors" of the Warm City [N]. Ordos Daily, 2024-06-28 (04).
- [12] Ordos Municipal Bureau of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. The Three-Year Action Plan for the Construction of Regional Public Brands of Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Products in Ordos (2024–2026) [EB/OL]. (2024-07-09) [2025-02-18]. Policy Interpretation of the Three-Year Action Plan for the

- Construction of Regional Public Brands of Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Products in Ordos (2024-2026) (ordos.gov.cn)
- [13] Municipal Water Investment Group. The Party Committee Secretary and Chairman of the Group, Wen Hao, Conducted a Survey and Provided Guidance on the Operation of the "Warm City, Multiple Flavors" Flagship Store to Solve Difficulties for Enterprises [EB/OL]. (2025-02-07) [2025-02-18]. [https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/mAscJ\\_biLFTIShWmTs429A](https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/mAscJ_biLFTIShWmTs429A)
- [14] Ordos Municipal Bureau of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. The "Warm City, Multiple Flavors" CCTV Advertising Campaign in Ordos Achieves Significant Results and Enhanced Dissemination Effects [EB/OL]. (2024-05-07) [2025-02-18]. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/XapJVX7Vwa3TX9rkgs00QQ>
- [15] Brand Construction Promotion Association. The Ordos Brand Construction Promotion Association Holds a "Standardization Service Seminar for Enterprises" [EB/OL]. (2024-11-27) [2025-02-18]. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/oTBBIHj34H7cn6K98qecnw>
- [16] Ordos Municipal Bureau of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. Breakthrough in the Brand Construction of "Warm City, Multiple Flavors" in Ordos: The Standard System for Three Categories of Agricultural Products Passes Expert [EB/OL]. (2025-02-17) [2025-02-18]. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/DLO1W3ApPyUY6X887xpfA>
- [17] Cashmere Giant Faces Calamity: How Far Is It from Becoming a Global Brand? [EB/OL]. (2025-02-17) [2025-02-18]. [https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Sbx2wwFD\\_llskpBVxkRWIw](https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Sbx2wwFD_llskpBVxkRWIw)
- [18] Wang Mingyi, Fan Jianming. Analysis of Industrial Adjustment Paths in Energy-Based Cities: A Case Study of Ordos [J]. China Energy, 2023, 45(12): 48-58.
- [19] Today, the Launch of the "Warm City, Multiple Flavors" Brand in Ordos [EB/OL]. (2023-09-19) [2025-02-18]. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/6yomYoNV0ScmRSgfPpB-Lw>