

Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

The Creativity Strategy on Enhancing the Cultural Brand for Xinyang City, China

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The Creativity Strategy on Enhancing the Cultural Brand for Xinyang City, China

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

……

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ABSTRACT

The research scope of this study is the City Cultural Brand of Xinyang City, China. In the global context of rapid urbanization, an increasing number of cities have recognized the pivotal role of cultural brands in distinguishing themselves and cultivating unique identities, and have begun to prioritize the development of city cultural brands, thereby enhancing city culture and expanding the international influence of these brands. As the capital of Mao Jian, a medium-sized city in central China, Xinyang is also the only city in China to be listed as one of the top ten liveable cities in China for ten consecutive years. However, the urban cultural brand of Xinyang City lacks the necessary popularity and recognition. This hinders the city from attracting tourists, investors, and facilitating cooperation that is beneficial to its economy and culture. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive innovation strategy to address the issue of the insufficient development of Xinyang City's cultural brand. This study adopts a combined qualitative and quantitative research method. Through literature collection, field investigation, observation interviews, and questionnaire design, 481 residents who have lived in Xinyang for many years will be surveyed. More than half of the respondents are those who have lived in Xinyang for over ten years. They come from various industries, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of Xinyang's city cultural brand. The study found that Xinyang has rich and diverse cultural resources. One of the most representative is tea culture. The tea-related bases and natural attractions in Xinyang (Ji Gong Mountain and Nan Wan Lake) are the most favorable. There are no particularly famous and distinctive cultural tourism products except for tea. Most people are not familiar with cultural activities except for the Tea Culture Festival, the South Bay Lake Fishing Festival, and the food festival. So, the cultural brand of Xinyang city can be positioned as the landscape tea capital, livable Xinyang. However, Xinyang City’s cultural brand is relatively

unknown at home and abroad, and cultural facilities, cultural activities and cultural tourism products are scarce and lacking in creativity. By studying the cultural brand construction experience of advanced cities at home and abroad, and combining the actual situation of Xinyang city cultural brand and questionnaire survey results, Finally, the theory of integrated marketing communication is applied from the aspects of Brand communication body, content of communication, channels of communication and mode of communication propagation and communicating effect are used to establish a creative strategic framework for promoting Xinyang's city cultural brand, to provide useful reference and guidance for the construction of city cultural brand in Xinyang and other cities at home and abroad.

Keywords: City cultural brand, creativity strategy, Xinyang City

Strategi Kreativiti Meningkatkan Jenama Budaya untuk Bandar Xinyang, China

ABSTRAK

Skop kajian ini ialah jenama budaya bandar Xinyang, China. Dalam konteks pembandaran global yang pesat, semakin banyak bandar mengiktiraf peranan utama jenama budaya dalam membezakan diri mereka dan membentuk identiti unik, dan telah mula memberi perhatian kepada pembinaan jenama budaya bandar, meningkatkan tahap budaya bandar, dan meningkatkan pengaruh antarabangsa jenama. Sebagai ibu kota Mao'an, sebuah bandar bersaiz sederhana di tengah China, Xinyang juga merupakan satu-satunya bandar di China yang telah dipilih sebagai salah satu "10 Bandar Boleh Hidup Terbaik di China" selama sepuluh tahun berturut-turut. Walau bagaimanapun, jenama budaya bandar Xinyang tidak mempunyai keterlihatan dan pengiktirafan yang diperlukan. Ini menghalang bandar daripada menarik pelancong, pelabur, dan mempromosikan kerjasama yang memberi manfaat kepada ekonomi dan budayanya. Terdapat keperluan mendesak untuk strategi inovasi komprehensif bagi menyelesaikan masalah pembangunan jenama budaya Xinyang yang kurang mencukupi. Gabungan kaedah penyelidikan kualitatif dan kuantitatif telah digunakan dalam kajian ini. Melalui pengumpulan literatur, tinjauan lapangan, temu bual pemerhatian, dan reka bentuk soal selidik, 481 penduduk yang telah tinggal di Xinyang selama bertahun-tahun lamanya akan ditinjau. Lebih separuh daripada responden telah tinggal di Xinyang selama lebih daripada 10 tahun. Mereka datang dari semua lapisan masyarakat, yang membantu untuk mempunyai pemahaman yang komprehensif tentang jenama budaya bandar Xinyang. Kajian mendapati bahawa Xinyang mempunyai sumber budaya yang kaya dan pelbagai. Yang paling mewakili lamanya budaya teh. Xinyang, khususnya Gunung Jigong dan Tasik Nam Van, adalah tempat yang paling popular untuk aktiviti berkaitan teh dan daya tariknya. Selain teh, tiada produk pelancongan budaya yang

terkenal dan unik. Selain daripada Festival Budaya Teh, Festival Memancing Tasik Nam Van dan Festival Makanan, kebanyakan orang tidak familiar dengan acara kebudayaan lain. Oleh itu, jenama budaya bandar Bandar Xinyang boleh diletakkan sebagai "ibu kota gunung dan sungai" dan "Xinyang yang boleh didiami". Walau bagaimanapun, jenama budaya Xinyang agak tidak dikenali di dalam dan luar negara, dan kemudahan kebudayaan, aktiviti kebudayaan dan produk pelancongan budaya adalah terhad dan kurang inovasi. Melalui kajian pengalaman pembinaan jenama budaya di bandar-bandar maju di dalam dan luar negara, digabungkan dengan keadaan sebenar jenama budaya Xinyang dan hasil tinjauan soal selidik, dan akhirnya, menggunakan teori komunikasi pemasaran bersepadu, rangka kerja strategik yang inovatif dibina untuk meningkatkan jenama budaya bandar Bandar Xinyang dari aspek subjek komunikasi jenama, kandungan komunikasi, saluran komunikasi dan mod komunikasi dan kesan komunikasi, dan menyediakan rujukan dan panduan yang berguna untuk pembinaan jenama budaya bandar-bandar lain di dalam dan luar negara.

Kata kunci: *Jenama budaya bandar, strategi kreativiti, bandar Xinyang*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPC	Communist Party of China
ATLAS	Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research
CCIS	City Culture Identity System
UGC	User Generated Content
PGC	Professional Generated Content
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the era of rapid urbanization and globalization, if a city wants to achieve sustainable development, it needs to pay attention to the construction of its city's cultural brand to enhance its international influence. The purpose of this study is to explore the creative strategy on enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China, and to establish a framework of the creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang City. The researcher noted that the city cultural brand is the core content of the city brand, representing the brand image of a city, Xinyang city has a unique geographical location and rich cultural resources, but its city cultural resources have not been properly developed and applied, city cultural brand awareness is low. Based on City brand marketing theory and Integrated brand communication theory, this study attempts to establish a creative strategy framework on enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China. As far as the researcher knows, the previous studies have not conducted a comprehensive and systematic study on the construction of Xinyang city cultural brand, nor have they comprehensively discussed and summarized the creativity strategy framework for Xinyang city cultural brand. Through research on the creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China, the research results will make a certain contribution to the construction of the cultural brand in Xinyang City and even other cities or regions.

Chapter 1 introduces the research background, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, research scope, research limitations, and research significance of this thesis.

These subsections briefly introduce what will be studied in this thesis and provide a comprehensive direction for this research.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on the main issues related to the research about the creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand. Firstly, the concepts of brand, city brand, city image, culture, city culture, city culture brand and so on are introduced； Secondly, it expounds the positioning of city cultural brand, and summarizes the types and principles of different scholars' positioning of city cultural brand and the positioning of some Chinese and foreign cities' cultural brand； then it discusses the shaping and dissemination of city cultural brand. Finally, it summarizes the strategic experience of some Chinese and foreign cities in the construction of a city's cultural brand. These literature reviews will broaden the academic horizon of the research and promote the development of follow-up research.

Chapter 3 describes the research methods of this study, that is, the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Including documentary method, fieldwork method, questionnaire survey method, case study method, and qualitative data analysis methods. These methods provide specific directions and ideas for the research.

Chapter 4 collects and discusses the research data in detail. Through the collection and analysis of predecessors, researchers and residents of Xinyang city on the understanding of the construction of Xinyang city cultural brand, to determine the positioning of Xinyang city cultural brand； By studying some excellent city culture brand building experiences at home and abroad, combining with the actuality of Xinyang city culture brand building, and finally applying the instruments and methods of the cultural brand shaping and communication, we establish a research framework of the creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang city, China.

Chapter 5 summarizes the main conclusions of this study and puts forward some suggestions for further research.

1.2 Research Background

In today's increasingly fierce city competition, the global competition has entered the era of cultural competition. The cultural brand of a city is a crucial aspect of its identity and can significantly impact the city's tourism, economy, and overall reputation. Building the brand of city culture and fully tapping into its connotations is an important way to showcase the city's unique charm and enhance the value of city culture. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in the report of the 19th CPC National Congress: "Culture is the soul of a country and a nation; Culture revitalizes the country and the nation is strong". (Party School of the CPC Central Committee (National Academy of Governance) Research Center for Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, 2019.) The 14th Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Outline of the Long-term Goals for 2035 set out the long-term goal of building a strong cultural country by 2035, He stressed that we should promote the construction of a strong socialist culture in the period of the 14th Five-Year Plan（China Tourism News，2021）.Xinyang City earnestly implements the decision-making and deployment of the Party Central Committee, and proposes in the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of Xinyang City and the Outline of the 2035 long-term Goals to promote cultural prosperity, cultivate the solid foundation of "two better", and accelerate the construction of a strong cultural city. In recent years, cultural tourism has become one of the important forms of tourism. According to a survey by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research (ATLAS), "Cultural travel is the fastest growing region in the world." In 2009, the Ministry of Culture and the National Tourism Administration issued the Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Combined

Development of Culture and Tourism, proposing that “culture is the soul of tourism, and tourism is an important carrier of culture”, pointing out that the implementation path of cultural and tourism integration includes cultural tourism activities (festivals) brand, tourism performance products, intangible cultural heritage products, cultural tourism crafts and other forms. It is necessary to attach importance to the reproduction and re-creation of traditional culture to meet the needs of tourists. In 2014, The State Council’s Several Opinions on Promoting the Reform and Development of Tourism emphasized the cultivation of tourism commodity brands, commercial blocks, specialty restaurants and theme hotels with local cultural characteristics; Encourage cooperation between professional art institutes and key tourist destinations; Utilizing traditional material cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage to develop cultural tourism, and promoting the integration of theater, performing arts, entertainment, animation and other industries with tourism to create cultural experience tourism. In 2016, the “13th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development” proposed cultivating cultural experience tourism, research trips, and leisure tourism in traditional villages, and supporting the integration of tourism with the development of cultural creative products and digital cultural industries. Build a conventional festival tourism brand, and promote the construction of colorful national culture tourism demonstration area; Promote the “scenic area + theater”, “scenic area + performing arts”, and other scenic area entertainment models. In 2019, The State Council issued the Opinions on Further Stimulating the Potential of Culture and Tourism Consumption, proposing to promote the integration of culture, tourism and modern technology, and develop a new generation of immersive experience culture and tourism consumption content based on 5G, ultra-high definition, augmented reality, virtual reality, artificial intelligence and other technologies. (Zou, 2021)

As the only city in China that has been on the list of China's top ten livable cities for ten consecutive years, Xinyang has also won the title of national civilized city, a National Sanitary

City, a National Garden City, a National Forest City, a National Model City for Greening, and an outstanding tourist city in, International Garden City (Office of Xinyang Municipal Government, 2023). With its profound historical heritage, magnificent natural landscape, and rich cultural heritage, Xinyang has great potential to become a cultural centre attracting attention at home and abroad. Therefore, it is of great practical significance to effectively utilize Xinyang's unique cultural assets and promote the cultural brand for Xinyang city through creativity, innovation, and strategic planning in this context.

1.3 Problem Statement

Xinyang, as a cultural hub in southern Henan Province, boasts a history of over a thousand years of city-building and an ecological foundation of "the south of the north and the north of the south". The development of its cultural assets is currently facing multi-dimensional challenges. Although Xinyang City has a rich historical and cultural heritage, effectively using and promoting the cultural assets of Xinyang City to promote the overall brand of Xinyang City is still a challenge. At present, the main problems are as follows:

Underutilization of Cultural Resources: Xinyang, as a medium-sized city, enjoys convenient transportation and is rich in natural resources and diverse cultural landscapes. However, these resource endowments have not brought Xinyang the due popularity and reputation it deserves (Yan, 2008). Xinyang City has rich cultural resources, such as tea culture, red culture, landscape culture, root culture, intangible cultural heritage, food culture, and so on. However, these resources are underutilized, resulting in missed opportunities to showcase the city's unique cultural identity.

Limited Cultural Brand Recognition: For Xinyang, the "City of mountains, waters and tea", the first tea festival was held in 1992. By 2023, 31 sessions had been held. Although the construction of the urban cultural brand in Xinyang City has achieved certain

accomplishments, there are still some shortcomings. Over the years, Xinyang has continuously focused on promoting the city with distinctive regional cultural elements such as "China's Tea Capital", "Red City of the Great Bend Mountain Revolution", and "Northern Jiangnan, Jiangnan Northernland". However, these diverse elements, although clear, are difficult to systematically represent the cultural characteristics of Xinyang City (Chen, 2024). The cultural brand of Xinyang City lacks the visibility and recognition it deserves. This is particularly evident at both the national and international levels, hindering the city's potential to attract tourists, investors, and collaborations that could contribute to its economic and cultural development.

Changing Socioeconomic Dynamics: From 2019 to 2023, over five years, the city's total GDP grew at an average annual rate of 5.9%, fixed asset investment increased at an average annual rate of 9.3%, local general public budget revenue grew at an average annual rate of 9%, retail sales of consumer goods increased at an average annual rate of 6.8%, grain output remained above 11 billion jin, and the per capita disposable income of urban and rural residents increased by an average annual rate of 6.9% and 9.3% respectively. The old revolutionary base area of Xinyang, along with the rest of the country, completed the building of a moderately prosperous society and achieved the first centenary goal. (Xinyang Municipal People's Government. (2023). The rapid pace of economic development and urbanization in Xinyang City has led to shifts in societal values and lifestyles. It is crucial to adapt the cultural brand to align with these changes while preserving the authenticity and historical significance of the city's cultural heritage.

Lack of Audience-Centric Approach: In the current digital era, the lowering of content production barriers and the diversification of channels have enabled everyone to become a creator and disseminator of content, and the number of urban communication entities is gradually increasing. At the same time, the communication entities are gradually shifting

from the previous professional and elite nature to a more common and popular form. The production content of many users has occupied the main position in information dissemination (Chen,2024). But there is a gap in understanding the diverse needs and expectations of different target audiences, including residents, tourists, and potential investors. Tailoring the cultural brand to resonate with these audiences is essential for its success and sustained relevance.

Limited branding strategies: In the current research, there are very few studies related to the urban cultural brand of Xinyang, and most of them focus on the tea industry economy. The existing research methodology is monotonous, and the strategy research is fragmented. No systematic framework has been formed. The construction of cultural brands in small and medium-sized cities is still in an underdeveloped state, but it holds great potential for growth and has advantages that are yet to be fully exploited. Existing promotional efforts may not be the most effective way to disseminate Xinyang's unique cultural offerings. A more creative and targeted approach is needed to reach a wider audience and create a lasting impression.

Limited Economic Impact: The economic potential of cultural brand enhancement remains largely untapped. Establishing a clear link between the culture initiatives and economic benefits, such as increased tourism and cultural industry growth, is essential for the sustainability of the proposed strategies.

Based on the above problem statements, research questions, and research objectives, a corresponding table was established, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1： PS-RQs-ROs correspondence table

Problem Statement	Research Questions	Research Objectives
Underutilization of Cultural Resources, Limited Cultural Brand Recognition	What is the status of the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China?	To identify the advantages and disadvantages of Xinyang City's cultural brand, determine its core competitiveness and unique charm, provide clear direction for brand positioning, and establish a basis for formulating innovation strategies.
Changing Socioeconomic Dynamics	How to enhance the awareness and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand?	To analyze the unique cultural resources of Xinyang City, analyze their characteristics and advantages, and explore how to effectively transform these resources into brand advantages to enhance the city's image and attractiveness.
Lack of Audience-Centric Approach, Limited branding strategies	What creative strategies should be adopted to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of Xinyang City's cultural brand?	To propose how to design and effectively implement creative strategies—including marketing activities, publicity, and promotion—to enhance the recognition and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand and establish a positive brand image in the market.

Source: Author Collected

Considering these challenges, there is a compelling need for a comprehensive creativity strategy that addresses the underdeveloped state of Xinyang City’s cultural brand. This research aims to identify, formulate, and implement creative solutions that not only elevate the cultural brand but also contribute to the city’s overall socio-economic development and cultural vibrancy. Based on the above problem statements, this study will break through research

methods, adopt a hybrid research approach, and integrate cultural resources to focus on exploring creative strategies for enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China. Its value is not only reflected in the breakthrough of the Xinyang case it is more about providing a replicable and innovative model for the construction of cultural brands in small and medium-sized cities.

1.4 Research Questions

This study will attempt to answer the following questions：

i. What is the status of the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China?

ii. How to enhance the awareness and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand?

iii. What creative strategies should be adopted to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of Xinyang City's cultural brand?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the above research questions, the researcher proposed the following research objectives：

i. To identify the advantages and disadvantages of Xinyang City's cultural brand, determine its core competitiveness and unique charm, provide clear direction for brand positioning, and establish a basis for formulating innovation strategies.

ii. To analyze the unique cultural resources of Xinyang City, analyze their characteristics and advantages, and explore how to effectively transform these resources into brand advantages to enhance the city's image and attractiveness.

iii. To propose how to design and effectively implement creative strategies—including marketing activities, publicity, and promotion—to enhance the recognition and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand and establish a positive brand image in the market.

By addressing these research objectives, it is possible to improve our understanding of the features of an effective cultural brand strategy in Xinyang City and provide recommendations and guidelines for stakeholders involved in promoting and enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City. This knowledge will help develop practical recommendations and best practices for enhancing creativity while preserving the cultural heritage and creating unique, appealing messages that resonate with multiple audiences.

1.6 Scope of the Research

The research scope of this study encompasses the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China. The primary objective of this study is to examine the cultural characteristics and unique values of Xinyang City and define the core cultural elements and brand positioning of Xinyang City. Research on how to create attractive and differentiated creative strategies through effective means of communication and promotion to convey the cultural brand image of Xinyang City to the target audience, to enhance the popularity, influence, and competitiveness of Xinyang's cultural brand.

Xinyang City is in the hinterland of the Central Plains (the heart of China), in the southernmost part of Henan Province, known as the south of the north and the north of the south, the through street of the three provinces (Henan Province, Anhui Province, Hubei Province), with good accessibility and geographical location, it is in the upper reaches of Huai River and the northern foot of Dabie Mountain. (as shown in Figure 1.1). It has a unique natural environment and human history, which can be traced back to the Xia and Shang Dynasties more than 8,000 years ago. It is the only one that has been selected as one of China’s top ten liveable cities for ten consecutive years from 2009 to 2018, and it is known as “the only permanent liveable city in China” and no longer ranks. Xinyang has also won the honorary titles of International Garden City, National Civilized City, National Sanitary City, National Garden City, National Forest City, National Model City for Greening, and China's Excellent Tourist City (Office of Xinyang Municipal Government,2023). With its profound historical deposits, magnificent natural landscape, and rich cultural heritage, Xinyang has great potential to become a cultural centre attracting attention at home and abroad. Therefore, Xinyang is worthy of our attention and research.



Figure 1.1： Location of Xinyang City on the map of China

(Source: National Bureau of Surveying, Mapping and Geographic Information)

1.7 Limitation of the Research

The first limitation of the research is the limited availability of data and information on the cultural heritage and identity of Xinyang City, as well as the effectiveness of past initiatives to promote and enhance its cultural brand. Additionally, the research may be

constrained by the limited resources and time available for conducting a comprehensive analysis and developing creative strategies.

Another limitation could be the potential lack of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in implementing the creativity strategy, which could impact the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed initiatives.

Finally, the research may also be limited by external factors such as political or economic changes that could impact the implementation and success of the proposed creativity strategy.

1.8 Significance of the Research

The research provides experts and scholars with a scientific knowledge system. It has studied the construction of Xinyang City cultural brand in China and established a framework of the creative strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China. It has the following significance:

Economic Development: Enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City can attract more tourists, investors, and businesses, leading to economic growth and development. A strong cultural brand can create opportunities for cultural tourism, creative industries, and cultural heritage preservation (Reeman Mohammed Rehan, 2014)

Image and Reputation: A well-established cultural brand can improve the overall image and reputation of Xinyang City. It can help in shaping a positive perception among both Chinese and international audiences, leading to increased recognition and visibility (Wu,2021).

Cultural Preservation: By focusing on the cultural brand, the research can contribute to the preservation and promotion of Xinyang City's cultural heritage. It can help

in safeguarding traditional practices, customs, and artifacts, ensuring their continuity for future generations.

Community Engagement: The research can foster community engagement and participation in cultural activities. It can encourage residents to take pride in their cultural heritage and actively contribute to its preservation and promotion.

Sustainable Development: A strong cultural brand can support sustainable development by promoting environmentally friendly practices, social inclusivity, and cultural diversity. It can contribute to the overall well-being and quality of life of residents.

Knowledge Expansion: This study helps to expand the existing knowledge system of cultural brand strategy. The insights and lessons it provide are not only applicable to Xinyang City but also to other cities and regions that face similar challenges in elevating their cultural brands.

Overall, the study is significant in driving economic growth in Xinyang City, protecting cultural heritage, fostering community participation, and promoting sustainable development in Xinyang City, China. It can also provide some positive suggestions for cultural brand building in other cities or regions.

1.9 Summary of Chapter

This chapter mainly systematically expounds the research background and practical significance of the construction of Xinyang's urban cultural brand. With the rapid urbanization and increased regional competition, urban cultural brands have become an important tool for enhancing urban competitiveness and promoting sustainable development. Xinyang, as a historical and cultural city in the southern part of Henan Province, although it is rich in cultural and tourism resources (such as tea culture, red culture, and ecological

resources), the uniqueness, dissemination power, and international influence of its cultural brand still need to be enhanced. Based on this practical issue, this study proposes a core research objective: to explore the creative strategies for Xinyang's urban cultural brand, aiming to achieve the innovative transformation of Xinyang's cultural resources through means such as cultural IP mining, brand positioning optimization, and digital communication.

The significance of the research is reflected in both theoretical and practical aspects: Theoretically, it can supplement the case studies on the construction of cultural brands in small and medium-sized cities in China; In practice, it provides operational brand strategy references for Xinyang and similar cities. These contents provide a general direction for this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Since the Industrial Revolution, the process of urbanization has been accelerating. In today's increasingly fierce city competition, the importance of cultural construction has gradually been widely recognized and has increasingly become the core factor of city competition. City branding has become a major trend in city construction, among which the most important strategy in city branding is to enhance the city's cultural brand. Therefore, the construction of a city's cultural brand has become an important force to promote the improvement of the city's comprehensive competitiveness, and creating unique cultural brands has gradually become the consensus of city builders in different regions. It is an important and meaningful topic to study how to promote a city's cultural brand through creative strategy.

An increasing number of cultural scholars now recognize city cultural branding as a critical component of urban development, while actively exploring innovative strategies to establish and strengthen these identities.

To explore various innovative strategies for the construction of Xinyang urban cultural brands more comprehensively and scientifically, this study collected many previous studies on city cultural brand construction, hoping to find the construction strategies closely related to the construction of the cultural brand for Xinyang city from this literature. The specific method of data collection is based on keywords such as city brand, city cultural brand, city cultural brand building strategy, and Xinyang cultural brand, which are searched

on academic resource websites, including Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, and CNKI.

Reviewing the Literature related to city cultural brand building strategy in the past helps me understand and examine the city cultural brand building and communication, to prepare for the sustainable development of exploring the creativity strategy to improve the construction of the cultural brand for Xinyang City in the future.

2.2 Brand

In the West, the study of "brand" is mainly seen in the field of business management. Brand, the original meaning is "burning". Theoretically speaking， from a marketing perspective, the American Marketing Association(1960) defines a brand as "a name, term, mark, symbol, or design， or a combination of them". This is the most well-known and cited definition of a 'brand', and it has been considered the starting point among all definitions of a 'brand'. Advertising Specialist J. P. Jones believes that a brand is a product that can provide customers with functional benefits and additional prices that they think are worth purchasing (Huang, 2005). Philip Kotler, a famous American scholar of management science, is known as the father of modern marketing. In his book Marketing Management, he believes that "a brand is a name, noun, mark, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, whose purpose is to identify a seller or a group of sellers' products or services and distinguish them from competitors' products or services; The connotation of the brand contains four aspects: name, mark, trademark, and copyright" (Philip Kotler, Meruhe et al.,2005). "Marketing Management" is the founding work of modern marketing and is now in its fourteenth reprint. Philip Kotler's understanding of "brand" also represents the general view of Western academia. Professor Peter Doyle of the University of Warwick, in the Journal of Marketing Management, defines a brand as "a name, symbol, design, or

combination that identifies a product of a particular organization as having a substantial, differentiated advantage" (Doyle, P., & Stern, P. ,2006).

The above is mainly from the brand itself to discuss its meaning, then for people or consumers, it undoubtedly has a more important connotation. For most people, Ginden (1993) believes that a brand means that it is undoubtedly the best choice. Aaker（2014）, Defines a brand as "It is more than just a name and logo, it is an organization's commitment to its customers to deliver what the brand stands for, not only in terms of functional benefits, but also in terms of emotional, self-expression and social benefits. But brands are about more than delivering on promises. It's also a journey, an evolving relationship based on the perceptions and experiences of customers every time they connect with a brand". According to Aaker, "A brand is a multidimensional combination of strategic elements (functional, emotional, self-expression) about (a product, service, business, or city) that work together in the public mind and generate a unique set of associations" (Ni, 2007). However, others argue that a brand is something that customers know and will respond to. Despite the formal definition, the purpose of a brand is essentially to establish the image of a product. This image will affect the perceived value of the product and will increase the value of the brand to consumers, leading to brand loyalty (Duan and Dai, 2009).

Although brands are typically associated with products, Ambler (1992) offers an alternative definition from a consumer's perspective. He defines a brand as: "the set of attributes that a consumer purchases and finds satisfying. These attributes can be tangible or intangible, rational or emotional, and may be genuine or perceived. Essentially, a brand represents a promise of satisfaction based on its unique bundle of attributes." Konecnik and Gartner (2007) state that a brand can be viewed as a legal instrument, logo, company, identity system, image, personality, relationship, and/or addition of value. This definition is like the

one presented by De Chernatony and McDonald (2001), who define a brand as a product, service, person, or place that has been enhanced in a way that meets the needs of the buyer or user and provides relevant and unique added value. The success of a brand is determined by its ability to sustain these added values in the face of competition" (Konecnik and Gartner, 2007).

While some scholars limit the definition of brands to signs or trademarks, others view it as a socio-psychological construct, as argued by Jacobsen (Jacobsen, 2009). According to this perspective, the value of brands lies in the mind of the consumer and their emotional connection with products, services, people, or places (Anholt, 1999) (Florek, 2005). Overall, there is agreement among scholars that brands are more than just physical entities and that their significance lies in the consumer's perception.

As the brand develops, it has begun to be widely used in various fields. The academic research on the brand is also increasing gradually. About the concept of branding， although the research Angle is different， they all do the same thing. The early consensus view was that the brand mainly consists of a brand name and brand logo; this is the most basic concept of branding. But with the deepening of brand research， the concept of the brand is no longer limited to the tangible logo level; it has an intangible function and value. Therefore, the connotation of the brand specifically includes two aspects: one is tangible brand equity， with a specific image and personalized "symbols", the other is intangible brand equity， which represents the intangible image of a business or product.

The brand is generally regarded as the value maximization of intangible assets. The concept of brand studied in this paper is more inclined to the meaning of its second intangible asset, that is, in a broad sense, it is the unity of product brand, enterprise brand, city brand,

and country brand. In a narrow sense, it refers to brand advertising words, brand slogans, and other personalized brand symbols. It replaces the physical product and represents the understanding and cognition of the product in the customer's mind, which is an abstract existence. David Ogilvy defines brands from three perspectives: individual attributes, historical reputation, and the intangible sum of advertising (Eric Joachim Thaler,2018). Huang Zhihua (2005) pointed out that a brand is the concentration of the total intangible assets of brand subjects. Sun Yueyao (2005) believes that a brand is the carrier for consumers to seek group identification and emotional belonging from the perspective of consumers. In his book Brand Science, Chinese strategist Chen Fang explains that a "brand" is the aggregate of all intangible assets of an enterprise or brand entity (including cities, individuals, etc.). This aggregation can be identified through specific images and personalized symbols. It emerges from the interaction between subject and object, subject and society, and enterprises and consumers (Huang Zhihua, 2005). Brands accumulate intangible assets by creating differentiated effects based on functional, rational, or tangible performance.

2.3 City Brand

2.3.1 Origin of City Brand

To study the origin of the city brand, we should start with the commodity brand. Under the condition of a commodity economy, enterprises establish commodity brands to occupy the market and prevent others from passing off their products. One or a group of famous brand enterprises, an industry, or several industries of famous brand enterprises in a region for a long time, will inevitably affect the public's impression and evaluation of this region, so it gradually forms a regional brand. When certain regions become brand-name regions, the representative cities of the region become famous cities, and these cities also want to have a brand. Once the city has its brand, it is worth a hundred times and has stronger

attraction and radiation, so the city brand has become a huge intangible asset" (Li, 2006). The formation of the brand of the commodity, the brand of the enterprise and the brand of the city may not necessarily have the continuity of time as Li Chengxun thinks their generation and formation should have spatial coexistence, because when the brand of the commodity is not formed, the city where the producer of the commodity is located should have long existed. After all, from the perspective of geography, "A dense combination of people and houses covering a certain area" is the city; of course, there is no emphasis that the dense population must be engaged in a commodity economy. Moreover, China's thousands of years of agricultural civilization must also have cities, and there must be "city brands" with significant differences in agricultural civilization symbols. However, from the perspective of the formation of city brands, or in what circumstances are more conducive to the formation of city brands, his analysis is still very reasonable. From the perspective of the origin of brand generation, it is the inevitable social history, is the product of social and economic development to a certain stage, the objective driving force is productivity, which is not transferred by people's will, but has a strong promotion of the generation and development of brands, creating an objective environment for city branding. The internal drive of people and organizations to pursue interests and the external pressure of survival and development are the basic elements of city branding（Wang, 2012）.

2.3.2 Connotation and Concept of City Brand

As the center of human life, cities play an important role in people's minds. The word "city" refers not only to the administrative space where people live and work but also to the dynamic, user-oriented space that focuses on the social relations and culture of the city's users. In addition, the cities studied have different values. These include the symbolic value given to it by its residents and outside observers, its service value from a tourism perspective,

and its value as a place of residence for citizens. Each of these values contributes directly to the meaning of the city (Yoon, 2010). A city is an area where the population is concentrated, industry and commerce are developed, and residents are mainly a non-agricultural population. It is usually the political, economic, and cultural center of the surrounding area. A geographical city is a dense combination of people and houses located in a convenient location and covering a certain area. Economists see cities as contiguous geographic areas with significant size, concentration of economic activity, and households that generate economies of scale in private enterprise and the public sector, and as interwoven networks of economic markets -housing, labour, land, transportation, and so on. The city is a regional network system composed of certain market elements, which can produce economies of scale. Sociologists look at social organization, and they see cities as geographically bounded forms of social organization with certain characteristics. To sum up, cities have natural attributes and sociality, fulfilling market functions and social functions. The emergence of cities is a sign of human maturity and civilization, and it is also an advanced form of human social life. As Aristotle once said, “Men gather in cities to live, and dwell in cities to live better” (Wang, 2012). This also confirms Shakespeare’s famous saying: “The city is the man”. So, what is the main body of the city? It consists of people and organizations, mainly including: city government, Enterprises and public institutions, professional institutions, A group of experts, City media, and citizens. They undertake the task of city brand building and seek public value to achieve sustainable development of social politics, economy and culture (Hu et al,2008).

City brand is the combination of city and brand, which is the product of brand development to a certain extent and is widely used in city research. The concept of city brand was first put forward by Professor Kevin Lane Keller of Duke University Fuquay School of

Business, a famous American scholar, in his book Strategic Brand Management: “Just like products and services, geographical location can also be a brand, that is, the city can be branded.” He believes: “City branding is to let people understand and know a city, naturally connect a certain image with the existence of the city, integrate its spirit into every building of the city, and make competition and life coexist with the city.” Cities can actively market themselves to the outside world through advertising, mail, and other communication methods to raise local awareness and create a positive brand image, thereby attracting individuals or businesses to visit the area for a short time or to move there for a long time. The names of these brands are usually local place names (Keller, 2009). The name of the city is the brand of the city. City brand is the city name, symbol and condensed city image and concept. (Zhang & Peng，2003).

With the continuous development of city research, the concept of city brand is also different because of the different perspectives of researchers. International scholars mainly apply the brand theory in marketing to explore the problem of city branding. The earliest research on city branding was developed from the theory of regional marketing (or city marketing). After Kevin Lane Keller put forward the concept of city brand, many scholars also expressed their views. Allen (2007) understood city brand from the perspective of regional brand, believing that it is a product brand and service brand in the sense of geography and politics. Kavaratzis and G.J. Ashworth defined city brand based on brand theory, pointing out that a city brand is a multi-dimensional structure, and city brand structure is divided into two parts by city behaviour and customer perception (Kavaratzis, M. & Ashworth, G. J.，2006). City branding is to shape people’s meaning and association with the city to achieve the purpose of improving the quality of life or promoting economic development (Singh & Hildreth, 2014).

Chinese scholars generally believe that a city brand is a comprehensive concept, including city economy, city environment, politics, culture, value (Zhao,2004) (Huang,2004).and other elements, such as the aspects of city style, values of city residents, and cultural level according to Ake's definition (Gao,2008). City brand is the construction of city image, and its biggest feature is the combination of different elements, which distinguishes it from other cities (Cai,2002). The city brand also can be summarized as "a series of unique associations jointly generated in the public mind by strategic identification elements such as functionality, sensibility and self-expression of a city" （Ma &Ni,2008). Based on the definition of city brand by American Marketing Association, the city brand is the general term of city identity, city image and city relationship, and is the intangible assets of a city (Chen,2004). According to some Chinese researchers, city brand means that city managers make use of the unique factor endowment, historical and cultural deposits, industrial advantages and other differentiated brand elements of the city to provide the target audience with sustained, trustworthy and relevant special promises, to improve the audience's response effectiveness to the city. Enhance the agglomeration benefit, scale benefit, and radiation effect of the city. The city brand must be supported by many ordinary brands, and the city brand, like the ordinary brand, also has basic brand attributes such as recognition and acquisition of added value. However, the city brand is not a simple superposition of many ordinary brands belonging to the city, but the formation of inclusive and unique city brands after the abstraction of many ordinary brands. City brands are more symbolic, more emotional and less visible than ordinary brands." (Du & Yuan ,2004). They emphasis on scientific management based on city customers is commendable. A city brand is a city in the process of promoting its city image, according to the strategic positioning of the city's development of the core concept transmitted to the public, and be recognized by

the society. The city brand is not only the external conditions and image of the city, but also the inner quality of the city, and the external expression of the city's nature, function, and civilization. City brand can reflect the unique personality of the city, it is the most precious city wealth, and its value is reflected in it can create an image and reputation for the city. The most important thing is that the city brand has great potential to create wealth and can continuously create new value for the city.

A city can be branded, and the name of a city brand is a place name. The main means of shaping a brand is communication, to improve its visibility, letting people know some characteristics of the city, and generating centripetal force and cohesion for the city.

In general, there are two different views on the understanding of city brand. One is from the perspective of the city, which thinks that the city is the name and mark of the "unique asset", or the name and mark of the city that contains the unique personality and audience utility of the city. In this view, if the value and characteristic elements of a city (such as city logo, city slogan, city landmark building, city natural scenery, city history, city culture, etc.) can be reflected through identification and communication, it can form a city brand (Hao & Bai, 2008). Cavaraz, Ashworth and others are representatives of this view; The other view is from the customer's point of view, that the recognition of city brand must examine the city's customers (Winfield-Pfefferkorn, J. (2005). That is, tourists, citizens, and visitors of the city, because customers are the main audience of the city brand, without their participation and evaluation, the city brand would be impossible to talk about. Hao Shengyu and others are representatives of this view. Hao Shengyu (2009) believes that Chinese researchers' understanding of city brands can be classified from the perspective of resources, product brands, culture, industry, marketing, and image. Future research should focus on the

perception of city customers, conduct scientific management and evaluation, and deal with the relationship between various stakeholders.

According to the above literature views, the researchers roughly summarized the concept of city brand, which has been studied by many scholars at home and abroad, as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1： The Concept of City Brand studied by scholars in China and abroad

Scholar	The Concept of City Brand
Kevin Lane Keller, etc. (2009)	Like products and people, a geographical location or a certain spatial area can also become a brand. The power of city branding is to let people know and understand a certain area and associate a certain image and desire with the existence of the city, so that its spirit is integrated into every building in the city, and competition and life coexist with the city.
Kavaraz (Mihalis Kavaratzis) and G.J.Ashworth (Ashworth) (2006)	Based on brand theory, it is pointed out that a city brand is a multi-dimensional structure, which is divided into two parts: city behaviour and customer perception.
Kevin Lynch (2001)	Usually, our understanding of the city is not fixed, but mixed with other related things to form, partial, one-sided impression. In the city, every sense will produce a reaction, after synthesis into an impression. This impression can also be understood as the brand image of the city in people's minds.
Li Haiying, &Zhai Yunkai (2004)	The connotation of a city brand refers to the characteristics of a city that can encapsulate the essence of a city through systematic construction and differentiate it from other cities. It is a synthesis of hardware, such as city buildings, roads, and green spaces, and software, such as citizens' quality, consciousness, and lifestyle.
Rui Hong(2004)	City brand refers to a medium formed in the process of city marketing or communication, which is used to connect the city with residents, tourists, investors, and other related interest groups, and bring new value. It is the intangible sum of the city's nature, name, history, reputation, and commitment, and it is also the target audience to create a clear and definite impression and a good association of the city.
Cai.L.A(2002)	City brand is the construction of a city's image, through different combinations of brand elements to distinguish it from other cities.

Huang JiangSong(2004)	The elements of a city brand include politics, economy, culture, and nature.
Gao Xiaoxue(2008)	City brand includes city style, the values of city residents, and the cultural level.
Ma Congling, & Ni Pengfei. (2008).	According to Acker's definition, the city brand is "a series of unique associations jointly generated in the public mind by strategic identification elements such as functionality, sensibility, and self-expression of the city".
Chen Yuebing(2004)	Based on the American Marketing Association's definition of a city brand, it is noted that a city brand encompasses the city's identity, image, and relationships. It represents an intangible asset that can be leveraged by the city.
Ji Fulin (2004)	It is a unique symbol that embodies the rich economic and cultural connotations and spiritual heritage of a city and distinguishes it from other cities.
Li Chengxun(2006)	A city's historical culture, geographical resources, economic technology, and other elements are widely recognized by the public are some of the most typical meanings of the appellation.
Ni Pengfei et al (2007)	It is a series of unique cognition and associations generated in the public mind by the strategic identification elements of the city, such as functionality, emotion, and self-expression.
Du Qinglong et al (2004)	It means that city managers make use of the unique factor endowment, historical and cultural precipitation, industrial advantages, and other differentiated brand elements of the city to provide continuous, trustworthy, and relevant special commitments to the target audience, to improve the audience's response to the city, and enhance the accumulation efficiency, scale efficiency, and radiation effect of a city.
Huang Zhihua (2005)	The city brand is an identification symbol that reflects the city's characteristics and development direction, representing the abstraction and sublimation of the city's image. It is considered a guiding ideology and conceptual framework for urban operation and management, which should evolve and expand alongside the city's development and transformations.
Sun Xiangming, Xu Jiao (2005)	A city brand is a distinctive identification symbol organically formed through urban development, which embodies the city's unique resources and conveys its competitive advantages.
Chen Jingxin et al (2005)	City brand is the unity of city style and personality, city image, and strength. It embodies the function, concept, and overall value orientation of the city, as well as the radiating force from the inside out and the attraction from the outside in.

Sun Lihui, Shi Xiaofei (2005)	City brand is the name, term, mark, or symbol that a city shows and communicates to its target public, which can express its core value, core positioning, and core characteristics of the city.
Fang Li (2005)	City brand is a city name and logo containing the unique personality and audience utility of the city. It is the overall impression and actual evaluation of the sum of various elements constituting the city in the eyes of the city's public, and is the external expression of the nature, function, and civilization of the city, with recognition, acceptability, and difference.
Sun Lichang (2005)	City brand is the systematic integration of city resources through the city itself (including the city's decision-makers, builders, and residents). A symbol that allows people to associate the concrete material city with some abstract spiritual image. This symbol is like the DNA (gene) of the city's body, and the faces of the city may be similar. But the DNA of cities is different.
Xia Zengyu, Xie Jian (2003)	It emphasizes that the city brand is closely related to the regional industry, and believes that the city brand is the comprehensive reflection of the collective behaviour of the enterprise brand in a certain region, the result of the cooperation and hard work of many enterprises, the concentration and refining of the essence of many enterprises' brands, and the popularity and reputation of an industry or a product formed in the region.
Chen Jianxin, Jiang Hai（2004）	City brand is the "unique asset "of a city. The so-called "unique assets" of a city mainly refer to the unique assets of a city, such as natural resources, society, population, culture, and productivity, which are the potential and energy contained in a city, the basis for the establishment of city positioning and core values, the essence of city identification and the core embodiment of city specialization, and therefore the source of city brand.
Ye Yongsheng, Jiang Hai, Qin Fan (2005)	Emphasis on rich characteristics to give a deep impression, the city's "unique assets" must be able to form a clear brand message, and form available symbols and basic materials of human memory. People's cognition of the city brand comes from the city's characteristics, and the "unique assets" of the city are the most recognizable symbol of the city's characteristics.

Source: Author Collected

The city brand is a comprehensive concept. This paper adopts a brand elements perspective to define it, encompassing political, economic, and cultural dimensions of the city, which collectively constitute the brand equity of the urban image. City brand elements can be divided into the following categories:(1) History and inheritance, such as historical

festivals, historical narratives, national stories, anniversaries, etc;(2) Cultural relics and spatial planning, landmarks, architecture, city areas;(3) activities and events, sports, festivals, iconic events processes and institutions;(4) Logo, picture, graphic symbol, video and other visual elements (Florek, M., 2012). From these city brand elements, it is not difficult to find that cultural elements mainly constitute the city brand value. (Um, H., Dong, J., Choi, M., & Jeong, J., 2021). It is the city manager who makes use of the city's unique factor endowment, historical and cultural characteristics, industrial advantages, and other differentiated brand elements to provide the target audience with sustained, trustworthy, and relevant special promises. To improve the audience's response to the city, enhance the city's agglomeration benefit, scale benefit, and radiation effect. For example, "Qingdao" reminds us of Tsingtao Beer, Haier Group, and sunny beaches; "Dalian" brings us the clean appearance of the city, football, female mounted police, and so on. Among them, city culture is an important factor affecting the development of the city brand.

2.3.3 City Image and City Brand

The competition between cities in the 21st century is not only the competition of science and technology, but also the competition of talent and quality of life. A humanized city with superior infrastructure and livability will inevitably have a strong attraction, thus occupying an advantage in the talent competition. At the same time, it can also enable citizens to form a good social atmosphere that loves the city, unite and forge ahead, and promote the development of the city.

When it comes to a city, people will first think of its distinctive characteristics, specifically the image of the city, such as Singapore Garden City, New York World Capital, Paris romantic fashion capital, Dubai luxury capital, and so on. The development of a city not only tells the story of economy and politics but also tells the story of culture (Wu,2021).

The image of a city is the impression of culture, a business card to attract investment, a reflection of humanity, a profound accumulation, an important intangible asset of a city, and a full reflection of its value. The establishment of the city image can not only improve the city's popularity, enhance the city's taste, and prosper the city's economy, but also enhance the city's internal soft power, and promote the city's long-term, healthy, and clear development (Peng, 2019).

City image is the comprehensive expression of a city's internal historical heritage and external characteristics, the overall characteristics and style of the city, and based on the city's functional positioning, the city's historical traditions, city signs, economic pillars, cultural accumulation, citizen behaviour norms, ecological environment, and other elements are shaped into the image that can be felt and the connotation can be understood. As the basic driving force of city development, city image can generate internal motivation and external attraction. It has the characteristics of complexity, wide mass, integration, and stability (Wang & Chen, 2001). Complexity means that the city image has many complicated and incalculable influencing factors, and the negative effects of a small number of factors can damage the existing image of a city. The image of a city is the overall evaluation of a city by various types of publics (internal and external public) with a wide range. Only winning the favour of a small number of the public or a certain type of public will not help to fundamentally improve the image of a city. Integration, the city image is not the mechanical addition of each local image of the city; to improve the city image must be from a general perspective, and do a good job in the overall design and construction of the city image. Stability means that once the image of a city is formed in a certain range of the public, it can be maintained for a considerable period (Zhu, 2006).

City image refers to the overall impression of the city formed by humans' feelings about the shape of the city (hardware part) and the quality, folk customs, cultural atmosphere, service attitude, etc. (software part), which is the reflection of city culture on the landscape (Yang, & Liu, 2002). In other words, city culture has a great influence and restriction on the formation of city image, and all aspects of city image are deeply branded with culture. As Ilil Saarinen said, "Show me your city, and I will be able to tell what the residents of this city pursue culturally" (Ren Ping et al, 2000). So, we can understand that "City image refers to the comprehensive impression and perception given by the city, that is, the reflection of the city in people's minds" (Zhang & He,1999), the overall appearance and the impression and opinion formed in the public mind of a city in the process of its economic, social, cultural, and ecological comprehensive development (Dong, 1999) (Dong & Niu, 2000), the sum of the outer macroscopic material image and the inner microscopic spiritual image of the city(Feng, 1996).

In short, the connotation of the city image is very rich; it is the unity of the city's material external image and internal spiritual and cultural quality, it is the unity of the city's material civilization and spiritual civilization, and can generally be divided into a visual image, a perception image, and a behaviour image, three aspects. Visual image mainly refers to the physical and visual characteristics of the city, such as city layout, city streets, city buildings, decoration, city signs, city traffic, city environment, infrastructure, residential buildings, business districts, etc., are the appearance of the city, is an important part of the city image; Perceived image refers to the organic whole composed of people and things, such as social order, economic environment, public relations, city culture, people's spiritual outlook, cultural literacy, service level, professional ethics, citizens' living standards, living habits, city characteristics, etc., which is the connotation and characteristics of the city;

Behaviour image mainly refers to the external expression form of city government behaviour, citizen behaviour, and tourist behaviour. Therefore, the city image has become the overall reflection of the city landscape image, citizen image, government image, city cultural image, city brand, and city logo, both tangible and intangible. Therefore, some scholars believe that the core of the concept of city image is the process and result of the public's information processing of a city, which includes direct information and indirect information, so city image can be divided into direct perceived image and indirect perceived image (Rao & Guo, 2001). The city's image can be managed as a brand and a strategy.

When it comes to city brands, we may think of the city image. Starting from the connotation of the brand, Wang Mei (1998) pointed out that the purpose of establishing a city brand is to develop intangible assets of the brand. The image construction of a city is the brand construction of a city, establishing the city image positioning; designing the city image logo; a Three-dimensional display of the city image; Building spiritual civilization is the guarantee of the city's brand. City brand building cannot be equated with brand image building; city brand building contains relatively broad content, and even a product brand building is not as simple as shaping the image. however, city image building is an important part of building a city brand. The city image is the overall understanding of the exterior and connotation of the city, which has different levels. As far as its external features are concerned, the image of a city is the first natural feature, such as location and landform (Fan,2004). Secondly, it is the second natural feature formed by city planning and spatial expansion. The inner characteristics of the city image can abstractly reflect the spirit and cultural temperament of the city, and the characteristics of the city's economy and employment structure are the basis for the existence and development of the whole city.

The purpose of city branding is to let people understand and know a certain feature or a specific image of the city, and generate centripetal force and cohesion for the city. City brand is not as all-inclusive as the city image, so that people have a comprehensive understanding; on the contrary, it is more like a labelling process, choosing which city image to highlight is the most critical link in the city branding. The core of city image construction is to create a good and comfortable living environment, which focuses on the residents inside the city. The people who benefit the most from better architecture, more green space and infrastructure, a more beautiful city appearance, and more convenient and smooth transportation are the inner-city residents, not the transient tourists. The management of the city brand is primarily externally oriented; its purpose is to attract external people, goods, capital, and information to the city, and through this attraction to achieve sustainable development of the city's economy. City branding strategy primarily involves aligning with urban development goals, identifying the most distinctive aspects of the city's image, and strategically packaging them through integrated marketing communications (e.g., promotional campaigns) to embed this brand identity in public consciousness. As theorized by Fan Fangzhi(2004), the city image encompasses broader dimensions than city branding. It integrates both tangible elements (natural landscapes, built environment, economic infrastructure) and intangible aspects (urban ethos). Conversely, city branding strategically curates and promotes selected facets of this composite image to construct a distinctive brand identity. Marketing believes that brand is the understanding and status in the hearts of customers, which needs long-term accumulation, especially the formation and promotion of a city brand is a systematic process, so the understanding of brand is too simple, which is not conducive to the construction of city brand, on the contrary, the shaping of brand image is a part of brand construction. Moreover, the city image construction to serve the “internal

customers", and the city brand is outgoing, serving the "external customers", such an understanding is not comprehensive enough, not only their own home interior decoration, benefits more is their own family. City brand construction should not only benefit the public but also benefit the four directions; otherwise, the significance of city brand construction is not much (Wang, 2012).

A city brand is the generalization and development of a city's image, which encompasses both the same and different characteristics of a city's image (Zhang & Peng, 2003). The similarities and the differences between city image and city brand are shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2： Similarities and the Differences between City Image and City Brand

Similarities	**Difference**	
All based on the objective existence of the city. All contain subjective evaluation factors. The ultimate purpose of building the city brand and shaping the city image is to enhance the city's comprehensive competitiveness and cultivate the core competitiveness.	**City image**	**City brand**
	Basics	Promotion
	Poly component system	Point(USP:Unique Selling Point, Benefit)
	A direct reflection of city reality	An indirect reflection of city reality
	City operators' subjective creation	City public passive information
	Inner construction rule	External design promotion

Source: Zhang, Z., & Peng, J (2003)

2.4 Culture

When it comes to city culture, we must understand the connotation of culture first. Culture runs through the material and spiritual, and can be said to be omnipresent, omnipresent, like a shadow. It has continuously promoted the historical process of human

civilization and promoted the progress of mankind. It is precisely because of the emergence and development of culture that human beings bid farewell to the age of ignorance and opened a new page in the era of civilization. It is precisely because of the accumulation and inheritance of culture that the pace of human society has been accelerated and countless achievements of civilization have been created. Since a city is a complex of behaviours, history, traditions, and natural landscapes, it requires an understanding of the culture of the area to fully understand it. Therefore, a city should first be understood through the basic attributes of culture. Although it is not easy to define "culture" because of its profound significance (Eagleton, 2000). According to the Oxford English Dictionary, culture generally refers to the patterns of human activities and the symbolic structures that give these activities meaning and importance. Culture is a very complicated word, and the understanding of culture is also varied and inconsistent. The American anthropologists Kluber (A. L. Kroeber) and Clyde Kluckhohn collected and analysed more than 160 definitions of culture by anthropologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, and other scholars (up to about 1973), spending about 30 percent of their time The page tries to give a precise definition of culture, but in the end, perhaps out of desperation, it turns to the metaphorical approach of making culture a map, a filter, and a matrix. (Geertz,1999). Despite this, for the needs of specific research, the definition of culture is still increasing, and there are more than 360 kinds at present (Cai Junsheng et al.,2002). Therefore, trying to define culture in a new and satisfactory way is bound to lead to a mire of confusion. However, from the historical process of the phenomenon of culture and the specific usage of the word culture, we may get some new inspirations, and then provide the theoretical basis for research. (Liu,2010).

The concept of "culture" has been defined and studied by various scientific disciplines, as it encompasses multiple dimensions that make it challenging to define.

Culture encompasses all aspects of life within a specific time and space framework (Kavaratzis, 2011). According to Kunzmann (2004), culture is commonly understood as a unique system comprising art, ideas, customs, and beliefs of a society or the creative expressions produced by people at a particular moment in history. It serves as an essential tool for human survival, but remains fragile due to its ever-changing nature and existence solely within our minds.

Given the uniqueness of everyone's brain, cultures developed by distinct groups inherently demonstrate authentic characteristics. Building upon Zukin's (1995) observation that "culture is a symbol-producing system," we can identify cultural products such as written languages, artworks, and policies, among others. The annotation of "culture" in "Ci Hai" is: in a broad sense, it refers to the sum of material wealth and spiritual wealth created in the historical practice of human society. In the narrow sense, culture-as a social ideology-is both the product of a society's political and economic development during a given historical period, and a force that exerts significant influence on and reaction to that development. (Chao,2003). "Culture" in ancient Chinese classics mostly refers to the meaning of "culture and education", and emphasizes the function of cultural teaching.

Culture, as the creative product of human society, embodies the dynamic interactions between humanity and nature, society, and fellow humans in urban development contexts. Wu Liang Yong (2002) once said, "Cultural accumulation exists in the city and architecture, integrates into people's life, exerts an invisible influence on the construction of the city, the concept and behaviour of citizens, and is the soul of the city and architecture." China is a vast and rich land filled with thousands of cities, each with its own unique story. When travellers come to a strange city, the first thing that catches their eye is the tall buildings of the city, the beautiful landscape, the prosperous business, the simple elegance of the

humanities, and the city culture that can attract the footsteps of travellers. City culture is the historical mark and lifestyle left over from different stages in the birth and evolution of a city. It is an integral part that reflects the regional characteristics of a city and is an important symbol of differentiation among cities. (Yang,2016).

Different from the early concept of Culture in China, the word "culture" in the West comes from the Latin "Colere", which contains the meaning of cultivation, in terms of things that exist naturally. After the 15th century, the West gradually absorbed the cultivation of human morality and ability into the meaning of "culture". Edward Taylor, a modern British anthropologist, put it in his book "Primitive Culture": "*culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society*. "(Tylor, E. B. (1871). Later, some sociologists and cultural anthropologists believe that "culture" not only includes the spiritual field and material aspects but also covers a broader and more complex scope. Such as: the traditions, arts, skills, and collective way of life of human groups. Harris(1998）believes that culture refers to the behaviour patterns of specific groups of people, that is, customs and people's lifestyles. British cultural theorist; Raymond Williams (1983) took the view that culture is one of the most complex words in the English language, and he summarized the definition of "culture" into three aspects. First, culture can refer to "the general process of intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development". Second, it refers to "a particular way of life of a group of people, a period, or a group". Third, culture can involve "works and practices created by the intellect, especially aesthetics" (Pan &Tang,2002). One common approach is to use "culture" to brand a city as the most efficient destination for cultural resources. Culture can serve as an international strategy for social, city, economic, and environmental renewal (Pratt， 1997). Therefore, culture plays an

important role in the construction of a city's brand. The role of culture is highlighted in the city's promotional materials for these new cultural districts, with the promise of "exciting" entertainment and an emphasis on cultural events and festivals(Richards & Wilson, 2006b).

Ji Xian Lin, a modern Chinese scholar, thought that culture was a general and ambiguous concept. Any culture is a complex cultural complex. It has both the elite culture of the upper class and the aspect of secular culture. (Ji & Zhang, 1997). Because of this, although researchers have elaborated "culture" from different perspectives, most Eastern and Western viewpoints have one thing in common: that is, its meaning has long gone beyond the scope of production and practice activities at the material level, and includes spiritual activities, involving the development of human society and penetrating all aspects of life. Culture will affect and change the human way of thinking and living, and even become an aesthetic activity.

We find that the concept of "culture" in city planning and city branding documents, then we understand it refers to art, design, architecture, history (Kunzmann, 2004), heritage (Anholt, 2007), related events, and cultural facilities. Even simply speaking, when we hear of culture, we may think of "creativity" immediately, a new sort of currency for places (Landry, 2000). Likewise, part of the culture field is entertainment too (Kunzmann, 2004), as delightful performance (Montgomery, 1990).

Culture is the product of human civilization, which is formed by human participation in social practice in the process of human evolution. It is the product of human conscious creation and the indispensable spiritual food for human survival. However, there is a close relationship between man and nature, and the interaction between man and nature has become an important part of culture; the development process of culture has also undergone dynamic changes. Then, in the modern commodity society, the brand becomes one of the

“cultural “carriers, which can arouse a new cultural ecological trend. The “culture” in this paper refers to the effective shaping and strategic planning of the brand, with culture as the engine of innovation.

This study agrees with Cai Junsheng’s understanding of culture, which has good practicality, that is, culture is the social information loaded by the consensus symbol system and its generation and development(Cai, 2003). This way of understanding shows that culture is both a verb and a noun; that is to say, culture is first a consensus symbol system. On the one hand, it puts forward a paradigm for the cognition and analysis of culture; on the other hand, it emphasizes the normativity of culture, that is, a consensus and a psychological state that influences and restricts human behaviour, and its positive effects are reflected in the cultivation and promotion of people. Secondly, culture carries social information, which shows that culture is reflexive, that is, it is not only a carrier but also a kind of social information itself. Therefore, what we usually say about material culture emphasizes the social information carried by material as a carrier. Third, culture has the character of inheritance and transcendence. Inheritance is manifested in the accumulation of culture in society and the acquisition and accumulation of culture in the process of individual socialization, and transcendence is manifested in the innovation and development of culture (Liu,2010).

2.4.1 City Culture

As a complex organism, the city is more of a geographical, administrative, regional, and economic unit concept. City culture represents the soul and temperament of a city, serving as a key indicator for measuring both the level of urban civilization and the comprehensive quality of life of its inhabitants (Huang, 2000).

Culture makes cities more individual. As the gathering place of human production and life, the city is the creation place of human civilization and the spiritual residence of human beings. In its formation and development, the city has formed a unique culture different from other cultures, which is the basis of the city's existence. Every city has its own culture, and culture is the soul of the city. Culture is a unique creation of human society. It is the fundamental symbol of why cities are cities and why people are human.

Due to the differences in geographical location, natural environment, historical evolution, social conditions, folk customs, and economic development conditions, each city also presents a different personality, presents a diversity of characteristics, and has a unique and colourful city culture. City culture is the local culture formed by the city as the carrier to reflect the city's citizens' ideology, cultural orientation, and ideal pursuit, reflecting the city's nature, history, society, economy, national tradition, local resources, and other smart use and combination of the self-state.

City culture not only comprehensively reflects the quality and development level of a city, but also the inner magnetic force of city citizens' identification and cohesion. It can be said that it is the soul of a city (Zhao & Li, 2003). Scott (2000) states that "cities have demonstrated a remarkable capacity to create cultures in the form of art, ideas, styles, and lifestyles, as well as to foster high levels of economic innovation and growth". As a result, "the cultural creative capacity of the city is being used for productive purposes". Culture and cultural activities can be seen as resources for human and community development, with great potential for development and the release of immeasurable value. City culture, as a spiritual highlight of a city, makes the city full of vitality and makes it unique. Therefore, the key to city development lies in whether a city has its characteristic , whether it is unique in attracting talent, technology, and capital. In other words, whether it has its own city culture

or not, city culture has always been the focus of city research. Scholars mainly focus on city cultural image, city cultural construction, city culture competitiveness, and other aspects (Wang, 2003). The essence of city competition is the competition of city culture, and city cultural competitiveness is an important part of city competitiveness (Zhang, L.F. & Zhang, R.K. 2005).

City culture is the spirit and soul of a city and the main symbol that distinguishes a city from other cities. From the perspective of spiritual culture, culture includes social ideology, values, historical accumulation, and corresponding ordinances, political and social organizations, customs and habits, academic thoughts, religious beliefs, literature and art, etc. From the perspective of industry, culture includes the production, circulation, and sales of media, performances, entertainment, books, newspapers, newspapers and audio-visual products, as well as emerging service fields such as network, exhibition and design, as well as architectural culture, ecological culture, educational technology culture, sports culture, leisure culture, and commercial culture (Li, 2009). More specifically and comprehensively, City culture should include morality, world outlook, values, philosophy of life, national spirit, group personality, cultural customs, social structure, ethical family relations, religious beliefs, daily life, symbol system, and other aspects. Based on this understanding, we can attribute the city's history and culture, development and change, function status, social structure, population composition, cultural products, spiritual atmosphere, as well as citizens' thinking mode, life mode, behaviour mode, personality type, value criteria, and interpersonal communication and cross-action to culture (Li, 2001).

City culture is the product of the development of human culture to a certain extent, and is a special form of human culture. It also has a broad and a narrow sense. According to White's understanding of the human cultural system or cultural structure， Chen Li Xu

(2002) divides the structure of city culture into three levels: material culture, institutional culture, and spiritual culture. One is the material culture of the city, which is the surface of the city's culture. The shell of city material culture is composed of all kinds of perceptible and tangible infrastructure of the city, including city layout, city buildings, city roads, city communication facilities, etc. The second is the institutional culture of the city, which is the middle structure of the city's culture. It is the institutionalized and standardized form of city culture. In the system of the city and culture, the most important ones are the family system, the economic system, and the political system. The third is the spiritual culture of the city, which is the core and deep structure of the city's culture. It is the sum of a city's spiritual civilization relative to the city's material culture and institutional culture, including a city's knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, customs, and all other abilities and habits acquired by residents as members of a city. As shown in Figure 2.1 (Zhang, 2007).

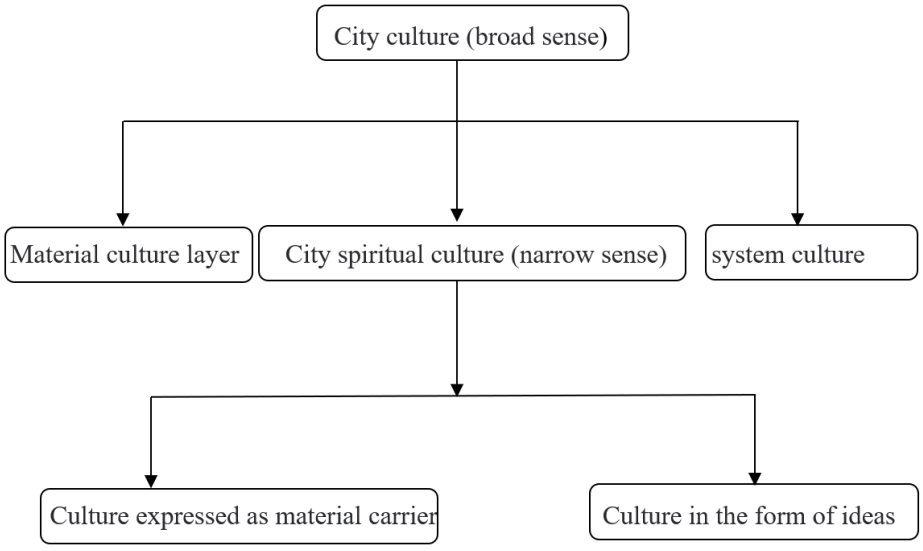


Figure 2.1： City Cultural Composition Map

(Source： Zhang Ping)

Liu Wenjian et al(2005) take a similar view, they state that city culture can be divided into three levels: first, the surface material culture, including the spiritual factors embodied in the tangible material factors such as city architectural style, geographical features, man-made landscapes, cultural sculptures, plazas, and roads; The second is the middle-level behaviour culture, including city laws and regulations, management system, city image, code of conduct, ceremony, organization and leadership mode and other spiritual factors reflected in the behaviour mode; The third is the deep concept culture, including the city spirit, values, the highest goal, customs, moral norms and other pure spiritual concept factors.

Ren Ping et al（2000）divide city culture into four levels：material level or material culture layer, that is, the city's architectural culture, including the cultural connotation of city architectural style, characteristics and colours, the structure and style of blocks, the architectural layout of the city, etc., which constitute the human living structure ; Management - institutional culture layer, including city management system, social stratification, social organizations, etc., which are the social structure of people and cities; Life and behaviour layer, that is, the vitality of the city, including the living customs and daily interactions of city residents, the degree of internationalization and globalization, fashion, etc.; psychology - concept culture layer, that is, ideology, such as religious concepts, political concepts, moral sentiments, philosophical concepts, artistic heritage and the institutions to which they belong, such as schools, libraries, theaters , bookstores and Internet cafes, etc., a kind of "spiritual civilization" order and level of humanistic values. The soul and core of the four levels of culture are humanistic values, and the entire city culture is nothing more than a cultural value system composed of the externalization of this core. Among them, the cultural value concept is the highest level, followed by the behaviour

culture level, the system management level, and the material vessels level, indicating that city culture is a cultural value system from the inside out. From this, the main way for the contemporary city to appreciate lifestyle, shape itself, and grasp society is through city culture. City culture is the way a city lives as a city (Zhang, 2007).

With the development of the economy and society, the connotation of city culture will continue to be enriched and expanded. The study of city culture in the West began with the rise of urbanization after the Industrial Revolution (Simmel, 2012; Whitt & Zukin, 1995). From the latest research, the scope of city culture research is expanding, and the connotation and extension of city culture are increasing. The research contents range from a simple exploration of city cultural functions to interdisciplinary research of city culture. City culture is constantly enriched (Huggins & Thompson, 2019; Robinson, 2016).

City culture is the thoughts, criteria, art, and other values created and absorbed from the outside world by city humans in the process of city development. It represents not only the crystallization of urban human thought but also embodies the collective wisdom of humanity. For the city culture, its connotation also has a broad sense and a narrow sense. The broad sense of city culture refers to the sum of material and spiritual wealth accumulated in the long-term development of the city. In the narrow sense, city culture refers to intangible wealth such as city spirit, including values, thoughts, and beliefs. Culture reflects the common values of a city, as well as the psychological state and spiritual outlook of city residents. (Zeng, n.d) Some scholars have noted the importance of city culture in city branding. They believe that city culture is the core value of city image, and takes city image as an important part of the city's cultural brand. Xu Yongfeng (2007) believes that city culture is the carrier of material civilization and spiritual civilization, reflecting aspects such as society and history, economy and technology, lifestyle and interpersonal relations. From

the perspective of types of city culture, Zhu Juncheng (2006) believes that city culture can be divided into material culture, spiritual culture, institutional culture, behavioural culture, historical culture, and modern culture. From a regional perspective, it only includes the cultural colour of the city in a specific region, but its source goes far beyond this region. In the process of urbanization, many foreign populations bring rich culture and knowledge, which is an important part of city culture. Simultaneously, the intercultural exchanges among cities and between cities and regions enable urban centers to continuously absorb and generate new cultural elements, thereby enriching their cultural complexity.

It can be said that city culture is a comprehensive culture. It preserves, inherits, and develops the culture of the whole human society. City culture is an important component of a city and city brand, although the related research on city culture has aroused the interest of many scholars. However, research on city culture remains nascent, with scholars lacking consensus on its defining components. At present, the typical and representative definitions of city culture are: “City culture is a kind of regional organizational culture, which is a complex of material, spiritual, institutional, and other cultural relics created under certain natural and humanistic historical background” (Zhang, 2002). City culture is the essence of a city’s temperament and the soul of a city’s formation. City culture has become a great driving force for city development. To shape the city’s image, we should highlight the cultural characteristics and fully understand the great value of the city’s “personality” and cultural characteristics. We must pay attention to “cultural thinking” and “cultural planning” in the construction of city image, and think about the problem of city image from the height of ideology and cultural development (Yan, 2002). City culture refers to the behaviour patterns, organizational structures, and moral norms co-created by people living in city areas in the process of transforming nature, society, and self-objectifying activities. As well as the

regional (or city characteristics) rules and regulations, ideological forms, knowledge systems, customs and habits, psychological states, and technical and artistic achievements formed by such activities (Qin, et al., 2004), the knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs and all abilities and habits acquired by city society in which human beings live in city social organizations (Zhang, et al.,1983). However, through a more comprehensive analysis, Zhu Juncheng (2006) also explained city culture from three aspects: First, city culture is a perspective of big culture and has a wide range of features. It not only refers to the inherent cultural image formed by the city's cultural and educational facilities, people's knowledge level and education level, but also includes the sum of the overall urban scene created by all material culture, institutional culture, and spiritual culture. Second, city culture is the result of a comprehensive understanding, that is, the subject's overall impression of the city object. It is not the understanding of individual people, nor the understanding of the individual elements of city culture by most people, but the result of the overall understanding of the city by most people. Third, the constituent elements of city culture include: city architectural culture, city public culture, city science and technology culture, city natural culture, city institutional culture, and city spiritual culture. They are the combination of natural culture and social culture, the unity of material culture, institutional culture, and spiritual culture.

The city culture has great energy not only in the spiritual field, but also in the economic field, and is a new industrial resource with high added value. The specific performance in the following aspects: city culture through stimulating consumption, promoting the circulation of commodities, to achieve the increase of the added value of city economy; Through the operation of cultural capital, the city cultural brand is built and the core competitiveness of the city is formed. Influence or change the structure and mode of the industrial economy through resource structure (Tian, 2006). Zhang Yi (2009) believes

that culture plays a very important role in the construction of a city brand, and a brand is also a cultural phenomenon. He discussed the relationship between city culture and city brand construction and pointed out the importance of attaching great importance to and promoting cultural construction, improving city cultural taste, carefully shaping city image, and building city brand.

In general, City culture is a very complex system，City culture is the sum of all the cultural forms of the city itself accumulated and formed by city residents in the long-term process of production and life. It is the product of human evolution to the city life stage, and it is the personal expression of the city and the spatial expression of human life. City culture is not only a historical phenomenon but also a temporal and regional organizational culture. It has evolved into a complex of various social material forms such as material, spirit, and system under a certain historical development background with time. The city brand construction should take countermeasures such as increasing the cultural (brand) heritage of city construction, forming its city characteristics, controlling environmental pollution, improving the soft environment, building a good entrance to the city, and increasing publicity efforts (Feng, 2002) According to the above literature views, the researchers sorted out some scholars' definitions of city culture, as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3： Some Scholars Define City Culture

Scholar	Definition of City Culture
Huang Nan	City culture is the soul and temperament of a city and is an important symbol to measure the degree of a city's civilization and people's comprehensive quality of life.
Zhang Hongyan	City culture is a kind of regional organizational culture, which is a complex of material, spiritual, institutional, and other cultural relics created under a certain natural and humanistic historical background.
Yan Ruchun	City culture is the essence of a city's temperament and the soul of a city's formation. City culture has become a great driving force for city development.
Zeng Di	City culture is the thoughts, criteria, art, and other values created and absorbed from the outside world by city humans in the process of city development. It is not only the crystallization of city human thought, but also represents the wisdom of the whole human being.
Qin Qiwen	City culture refers to the behaviour patterns, organizational structures, and moral norms co-created by people living in city areas in the process of transforming nature, society, and self-objectifying activities. As well as the regional(or city characteristics), rules and regulations, ideological forms, knowledge systems, customs and habits, psychological states, and technical and artistic achievements formed by such activities.
Liu Wenjian	City culture can be divided into three levels: first, the surface material culture, including the spiritual factors embodied in the tangible material factors such as city architectural style, geographical features, man-made landscapes, cultural sculptures, plazas, and roads; The second is the middle-level behaviour culture, including city laws and regulations, management system, city image, code of conduct, ceremony, organization and leadership mode and other spiritual factors reflected in the behaviour mode; The third is the deep concept culture, including the city spirit, values, the highest goal, customs, moral norms and other pure spiritual concept factors.
Zhang Li-Tang, Tang Xue-Bin	City culture refers to the knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and all abilities and habits acquired by city society in which human beings live in city social organizations.
Li Zhibin	City culture should include morality, world outlook, values, philosophy of life, national spirit, group personality, cultural customs, social structure, ethical family relations, religious

	beliefs, daily life, symbol system, and other aspects. Based on this understanding, we can attribute the city's history and culture, development and change, function status, social structure, population composition, cultural products, spiritual atmosphere, as well as citizens' thinking mode, life mode, behaviour mode, personality type, value criteria, and interpersonal communication and cross-action to culture.
Tian gensheng	City culture has great energy not only in the spiritual field, but also in the economic field, and is a new industrial resource with high added value.
Xu Yongfeng	City culture is the carrier of material civilization and spiritual civilization, reflecting aspects such as society and history, economy and technology, lifestyle, and interpersonal relations.

Source： Author Collected

The content of city culture is still very rich; it is the product of human evolution to the city life stage, is the personal expression of the city, but also the spatial expression of human life. City culture is not only a historical phenomenon but also a temporal and regional organizational culture. Emerging within specific historical contexts, it evolves into diverse sociomaterial formations, encompassing material, spiritual, and institutional complexes. Scholars' different definitions of the connotation of city culture are mainly due to the differences in the selected research objects, the research standards involved, and the main problems concerned. The definitions of city culture made by different scholars help people to understand this concept comprehensively.

2.4.2 City cultural brand

City brand is a complex that includes various elements of city politics, economy, and culture, among which city culture is an important factor affecting the development of city brand, and city cultural brand is the key to the future construction of city brand. Therefore, as an important research object of this paper, it is necessary to discuss and summarize the related concepts of the city's cultural brand.

Compared with the research on city brand, the research on city culture brand is still very limited. Therefore, it has theoretical significance and practical value to study city culture brand in a situation where culture has become the core content of the brand.

There is no entry for “culture brand” in the 2000 edition of “Ci Hai (Reduced version)”, which shows that the influence of this term in contemporary Chinese has only happened since the new century. According to the content provided by the “online database” of Da Cihai, a “culture brand” is “an intangible asset that brings premium and value-added to the owned cultural enterprises, including goodwill, products, corporate culture, and the management of the overall operation”. (Xia & Chen, 2015). According to the explanation of “enterprise” in “Ci Hai”, in the general understanding, “cultural brand” still refers to the phenomenon of brand building in the for-profit field.

In English, the concept related to “culture brand” is called Intellectual Property (IP for short), which has been applied increasingly widely in recent years. According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Intellectual Property means “something which someone has invented or has the right to make or sell, especially something protected by a patent, trademark, or copyright” (Hughes, 1996). This meaning is sometimes referred to simply as “intellectual property”. In recent years, it has often been used as a synonym for “culture brand”, which also shows the spiritual attributes of “culture brand”. Like the emergence and development of the concept of “cultural brand”, “city brand” is also a city construction phenomenon that has gradually attracted people’s attention since the new century. “City branding is an obvious shift in city marketing research since entering the 21st century. The international academic journals Journal of Vacation Marketing (1999) and Journal of Brand Management (2002) have a special discussion on city branding. And the establishment of Place Branding (2004) magazine are both witnesses and promoters of the

growing popularity of city branding" (Liu,2015). Liu Yanping edited "China City Marketing Development Report" said that this statement is in line with the actual situation of the development of "city brand". The so-called "city culture brand" is obviously both a "city brand" and a "culture brand". As a "city brand", it has experienced different stages of planning and marketing, so that it has a brand planning consciousness for itself, but also the outside world, although the current too strong concept of city marketing, to some extent, promote the "homogenization" trend of city cultural brand construction. As a "cultural brand", its dual attributes of "culture industry" and "culture undertakings" make it shoulder two missions of social benefits and economic benefits, although at this stage, city builders are more interested in the construction of industrial culture brands.

As a kind of "brand", "city culture brand" is obviously formed under the guidance of the concept of some cultural development and in the process of the rapid development of urbanization in our country, so it must have two attributes of concept and practice. From the perspective of ideology, a "city culture brand" can be regarded as a "brand" spanning the two fields of "city" and "culture". To be defined is naturally a limitation; however, it is precisely the root of the formation of brand characteristics. From the perspective of practice form, a "city culture brand" is gradually developed in the evolution process of our country's city construction from planning to marketing. On the one hand, "city culture brand" can be based on early planning and marketing; On the other hand, these planning and marketing models also restrict the shaping process of "city culture brand" to a certain extent. The construction of China's 'city culture brand' is gradually developing under such limitations and constraints, as well as in the context of the era of regulation and dependence. The development of city culture branding in China remains at an exploratory stage, having yet to establish a universally applicable theoretical framework, let alone accumulate practical

experience with broad replicability (Gao & Cong, 2019). City culture brand is a relatively comprehensive component, which is formed based on city culture. Lewis Mumford, a famous American city planner, once said that a city is the "container" of culture (Lewis, Mumford, Song, Junling, & Song, Yiran, 2019), and culture is the soul of a city. When a city loses its cultural gene, its personality is obliterated, and its competitive advantage is out of the question. City culture is the spatial form of the city, which has unlimited inclusiveness. City culture mainly contains two content elements: the culture expressed in the material carrier and the culture existing in humanistic form. Both the material carrier and the humanistic form are different from other cities. For example, the Opera House in Sydney, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and the Oriental Pearl in Shanghai are the embodiment of the material carrier of the city, which is touchable, visual, and replicable. The language, customs, spirit, system, and activities of the city are intangible, perceptual, and unique manifestations of city culture and humanity. It refers to the distinctive characteristics formed by a city's historical and cultural traditions, architectural facilities, social and cultural activities, cultural industries, cultural products, and cultural atmosphere. It is an image expression that can represent the city and produce an overall impression and evaluation among the public from all walks of life, and is easy to identify by people (Zhang, 2007).

For the connotation of city culture brand, Li Jiao (2009)Based on the definition of city brand by many scholars, She attempts to define city cultural brand as follows: The so-called city culture brand refers to the specific, systematic, and perceptible culture brand created by a city in the process of shaping and promoting its brand image by analysing, refining and integrating the unique cultural element endowment of its city, that is, based on differentiated brand elements such as historical cultural accumulation and cultural industry advantages. Brand image with cultural factors as the main component. Building a strong city

culture brand can make a city beat other cities in the market competition , become the audience's first choice for investment, tourism, residence, and employment , and give the city a broader space for development. While Wang Guozhong (2012) states that the city cultural brand is a special carrier symbolized in the process of city cultural development, which is used to concentrate on showing the city's spiritual style and city culture, and it is also a collection that can best reflect the current characteristics of the city and can best express the city's cultural characteristics. It mainly highlights that the brand of city culture is the carrier of city culture, and the concept is concise and abstract. Van Puyen-broeck et al (2021) also have a similar view, but they think comprehensively from the perspective of city builders and stakeholders, believing that city culture brands refer to the products that city builders extract from the unique natural and cultural endowments and historical heritage of their cities, and they then provide trustworthy promises of cultural values to city stakeholders. Enhance stakeholders' sense of identity and belonging to the city's cultural brand.

Zhang Ge (2020) gives a more detailed and easy-to-understand definition, believing that city culture brand covers the cultural form of city material space, institutions, rules and regulations, and humanistic thoughts. Based on the definition of the city brand, many scholars define city culture brand as follows: City cultural brand refers to the concrete, recognizable, and perceptible city brand image created by city managers according to the city's geographical environment, historical accumulation, and cultural industry analysis, and the unique cultural factors that condense the city. It is a name, a sign, a symbol, or a design used to identify a specific city culture. Xi Luyang (2014) has a similar view. He believes that a city culture brand refers to a specific, systematic, and perceptible brand image shaped by city managers based on analysing, refining, and integrating the unique cultural elements of the city, that is, the historical and cultural accumulation, cultural industry advantages, and

other differentiated brand elements, with cultural factors as the main components. City cultural brand is the unity of city style and personality, city image, and strength in the process of spreading its image. It condenses and reflects the function, concept, and overall value orientation of the city, as well as the radiation force from the inside out and the attraction from the outside in, and is recognized by society (Cao, 2011).

Of course, we find that city cultural brand building plays an important role in the development process of urbanization. A good city image is the embodiment of city cohesion, combat effectiveness, and influence, which can optimize the allocation of city resources and create more opportunities for diverse city development while finding a sense of cultural belonging for the public (Li, 2018). For example, China's "dragon city" Shenzhen, "mountain city" Chongqing, "leisure quality city" Hangzhou, "Six dynasties ancient capital" Nanjing, and so on. The city's cultural brand is a comprehensive reflection of the attraction and tension generated by the city with its unique culture, and it is the killer card for the city to win the competition. However, some scholars have noted the importance of city culture brand; they offer a Clear and specific definition from a comprehensive perspective. Based on Philip Kotler's definition of brand and combined with academic research results on city brand, Su Xuan and Li Jinhua (2010) hold that city cultural brand refers to a name, sign, symbol, design, and other relevant elements used to identify city culture, and its function is to identify the cultural differences between a city and another city. And to make it different from the rival city culture, in the public mind, to form an impression, and produce the city's cultural cognition. They also believe that the concept of the city cultural brand is composed of three levels: the first level is the name of the city cultural brand; The second level is the brand mark of city culture; The third level is the added value of the city cultural brand. Among them, the city cultural brand name is the appellation of the city cultural brand, which

can be expressed in language and text; City cultural brand marks are the parts of the brand that can be recognized but cannot be expressed in oral pronunciation, such as symbols, patterns or unique colours or letters; The added value of city cultural brand contains the special interests of the city and has complex and diverse attributes.

From the above point of view, It can be seen that there is agreement among scholars that a city culture brand is a cultural phenomenon with special value and wide influence gradually formed in the process of city development, it embodies the unique value concept of a specific city, reflects the popularity, reputation, and credibility of the city, plays the magnetic pole effect of the city, effectively attracts the flow of people, logistics, capital flow, and information flow, integrates cultural resources to the maximum extent, and enhances the competitiveness and influence of the city.

Although the above studies on the concept of the city cultural brand are very reasonable, this study agrees more with Li Jian and Wu Manli's definition of a city cultural brand. They believe that a city's cultural brand is a comprehensive external expression of city culture formed by a city's cultural history, cultural heritage, cultural value, cultural concept, lifestyle, residents' mental state, and related cultural activities, and a positive cognition, recognition, and evaluation system made by the society, including emotion, value, and association. As a kind of city brand, the core of the city culture brand lies in "city culture". It not only has commercial attributes, has its measurable brand value and can lead and form the cultural industry, promote and maintain the Chinese and international export of city cultural products, but also has ideological attributes and is a positive social cognition and evaluation system. Compared with the general commercial brand, it emphasizes more cultural innovation, so it has an internal correlation with creation, dreams, and so on. (li & Wu, 2014).

At present, the academic circles have slightly different definitions of a city's cultural brand. First, it is defined as the brand of city culture, focusing on the study of the overall image brand of the city from the perspective of city brand, such as "Yangcheng" Guangzhou, "Song city" Nanning, and giving the city some distinctive cultural brand characteristics, to distinguish it from other cities. The second is to define it as the cultural brand of the city and focus on the study of the iconic cultural brand of the city, such as West Lake in Hangzhou and the Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an. For the city, this cultural brand has a strong correlation with the city's image, which distinguishes the city from other cities to some extent, but this cultural brand is not the only one (Liang & Yin, 2015). In this paper, the definition of Xinyang City's cultural brand mainly belongs to the latter, specifically from the perspective of cultural resources, to explore its iconic cultural brand.

2.4.3 The Relationship Between City Culture Brand and City Brand

City culture brand is the subdivision of city brand elements, and it is the process and performance of branding a city's culture. City culture occupies most of the city brand and is the intangible asset of the city brand. Therefore, the relationship between a city's cultural brand and its city brand has become a topic that researchers focus on. The main views of the researchers are reflected in two aspects: First, city culture is the core of the city brand. As stated by Mo Zhiyong (2018), all city image communication work is carried out around city culture, and the core status of city culture is prominent. Second, city culture is an important driving force for city development. City culture is the "soft driving force" to promote sustainable city development. City culture and city resources, and economy are mutually promoting, coordinating, and unifying (Zeng, 2009). Zhu Juncheng (2006) sorted out the relationship between city culture and city brand from the three aspects of economic value, social value, and ecological value of city culture, and discussed the significance of city

culture to the development of city brand. City culture plays an important role in building the city's brand image and is an important part of the city's brand construction. As an important object of this study, the city's cultural brand also has important research value. The city culture brand is an important part of the city brand, and the city cultural brand strategy has also become an important part of the overall development strategy of the city.

The biggest difference between a city brand and a city culture brand is culture. The famous American economist Sisler put forward, “Culture is called the last bucket of gold in the 21st century; whoever can first dig this bucket of gold, can dominate the 21st century.” The French economist Francois Peroux, referring to the relationship between economy and culture, has argued that “attempts to separate common economic goals from their cultural environment will ultimately fail, and despite the most ingenious intellectual techniques, no economic concept can be thoroughly thought through without its cultural foundations.” The city's cultural brand must be the city’s brand, but the city's brand is not necessarily the city's cultural brand. Only by distinguishing the concepts of the two can we effectively develop the city's cultural brand. To be committed to the construction and development of the city's cultural brand, we must work hard on culture. (Yang, 2016).

In today’s times of transition from industrial to cultural paradigms, there are attempts to solve various social problems through design factors. The paradigm shift from politics and economics to culture is a movement to build city culture and renew understanding of culture, and has been a driving force to restore cultural identity from developed to less developed countries (Miles et al., 2004). Since the end of the 20th century, due to the improvement in the quality of life, political evolution, economic changes, globalization, and the development of information technology, developed countries have obtained a lot of information and wealth, and people are more inclined to “cultural values” and consider

spiritual wealth and virtue more important (Hall, 1998; Miles et al, 2004). From this point of view, the construction of city cultural brands has become important in today's era.

2.4.4 City Cultural Brand Conceptual Model

The composition of a city culture brand is complex, it includes the building of the city, the environment, production substances such as the content of the cultural level, including city management, moral norms and legal system construction, system cultural, history and culture and so on in the face of the guide and the safeguard, also including the artistic culture, the spirit of the humanistic atmosphere created by cultural level. Regarding the concept and composition of a city's cultural brand, we can learn from the conceptual model of a city's cultural brand proposed by Su Xuan and Li Jinhua (2010). As shown in Figure 2.2.

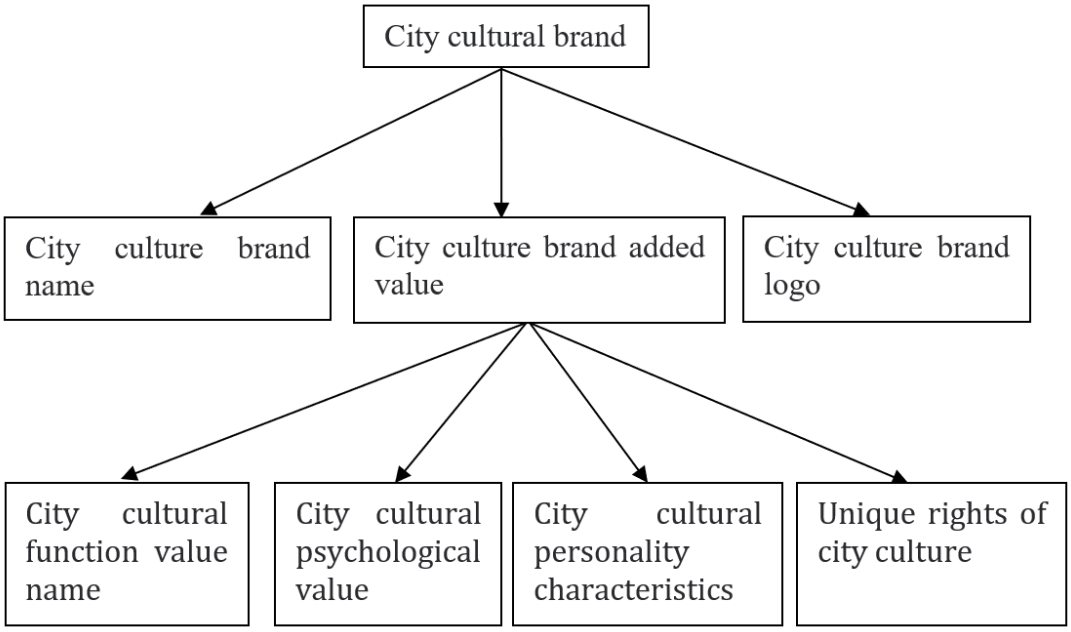


Figure 2.2： City Cultural Brand Conceptual Model

(Source: Su Xuan and Li Jinhua, 2010)

The three middle-row boxes represent the hierarchical structure of the city's cultural brand, with each box corresponding to a distinct tier: (1) the cultural brand name, (2) the cultural brand mark, and (3) the cultural brand's added value. Among them, the added value of a city's cultural brand consists of four parts: city cultural function value, city cultural psychological value, city cultural personality characteristics, and city cultural unique rights. The connection indicates the relationship between the various elements and the cultural brand of the city. They constitute the whole concept of the city's cultural brand.

The model defines the city culture brand from different classification perspectives, such as city culture brand name, city culture brand mark, and city culture brand added value. This conceptual model is clear and helps us to clearly understand the connotation and key elements of the city's cultural brand. In addition, the connotation of the city's cultural brand can also be discussed from tangible and intangible perspectives. Tangible cultural brand refers to visible cultural products and cultural infrastructure. Intangible cultural brand refers to abstract cultural concepts and customs, namely “hard brand” and “soft brand,” proposed by Jiang Yao and Zhao Yuanyuan (2013). This research Angle reasonably interprets the two forms of city cultural brand, and points out that city cultural brand is the unity of tangible assets and intangible assets. The researchers’ study from different angles, but they all point out that the city's cultural brand is a synthesis of tangible and intangible elements. This paper defines city cultural brand as: The so-called city cultural brand refers to a city in the process of shaping and promoting the brand image, analysis, refinement, and integration of the city’s unique cultural element endowment, that is, historical and cultural accumulation, natural and cultural resources, cultural industry advantages, and other differentiated brand elements are symbolized. The specific, systematic, and perceptive brand image created to concentrate on

the display of the city's spiritual style and city culture is the special carrier, and the brand image with cultural factors as the main component is also the collection that can best reflect the current characteristics of the city and the characteristics of the city culture.

2.4.5 The Characteristics of City Cultural Brand

A city cultural brand is a kind of cultural symbol and business card of the city, which highly concentrates the unique cultural personality and charm of the city, and the core competitiveness of the brand is concentrated in its unique cultural value. It naturally becomes a symbol of the city's character and city characteristics, and becomes the most influential city culture card, so culture is its primary feature. Secondly, the city's cultural brand is rooted in a specific region and formed as a representative and symbol of the city. The representation of the city's cultural brand is difficult for other cities to imitate, copy, and replace, giving the city infinite scenery and the meaning of being the leader. Third, a city's cultural brand refers to the unique temperament of a certain city, which can be distinguished from many cities and can be identified by reflecting its unique personality. In other words, its unique city behaviour, city environment, city concept, and other essential and external characteristics are different from those of other cities. This trait can be perceived and recognized by people through mental and physical feelings. The identifiability of a city's cultural brand is easy to be accepted, remembered, and recognized by people. The successful city cultural brand must have a distinctive brand identity image of "from the need not to remember, never forget". Fourth, Strategy is a new means of innovation and strategic offensive competition for urban cultural brands. It adopts innovative thinking to construct a competitive strategy between the city and other cities, and builds a city competition strategy platform by integrating and optimizing the internal resources of the city, and uses the core competitiveness of the city's cultural brand to attack other competitors. All these processes require the unique strategic

resource advantage of shaping the city's cultural brand, that is, the core competitiveness of the city's cultural brand (Yang, 2016). Fifth, from the perspective of subjective evaluation, the establishment of the city's cultural brand is the result of the comprehensive experience and social evaluation of the public for a long time, which means higher reputation, fame, popularity, reputation, and satisfaction. Finally, from the perspective of value orientation, the city's cultural brand represents intangible assets, cultural added value, and other value meanings of the city (Li & Wu, 2014). In short, the characteristics of city cultural brands can be shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4： Characteristics of City Cultural Brands

Characteristic	**Concrete Expression**
Cultural	It is an important distinguishing mark between a city's cultural brand and its city brand. Highly condensed and concentrated to show the unique cultural personality and cultural charm of the city, it is a cultural symbol and business card of the city, and is also the essence of the city's cultural brand.
Representativeness	Something that represents the character of the city. This kind of representative thing is unique to the city, rather than transplanted from other cities; it is the product of specific city development, it is subject to the city's geographical environment, climate conditions, history and culture, customs, and other factors. It is the representative and symbol of the city, which is difficult for other cities to imitate, copy, and replace, giving the city scenery unlimited and the implication of leading.
Identifiability	Means that in a city, its own unique city behaviour, city environment, and city concept have essential and external characteristics that are different from other cities. It can be perceived and recognized through both psychological and

	physiological responses, making it easily accepted, remembered, and identified by people.
Strategic	It is a brand-new, innovative, and strategic offensive competitive means for the city's cultural brand. It uses innovative thinking to build a competitive strategy between the city and other cities, builds a strategic platform for city competition by integrating and optimising the city's internal resources, and attacks other competitors by using the core competitiveness formed by the city's cultural brand. All these processes require obtaining a unique strategic resource advantage through the shaping of the city's cultural brand, that is, the core competitiveness of the city's cultural brand.
Popularity	The establishment of the city's cultural brand is the result of a comprehensive experience and social evaluation over a long time, which means higher reputation, fame, popularity, and satisfaction.
Value	City cultural brand represents the intangible assets, cultural added value, and other values of the city.

Source: Li & Wu (2014)

2.4.6 Research on the Positioning of City Cultural Brands

The brand positioning is the key to building a cultural brand. To achieve the purpose of spiritual resonance with the audience, a brand must first improve its cultural positioning (Zhou, 2011). Scholars Huang Ming and Xue Yunjian (2012) pointed out in their research that brands can enhance their cultural value by positioning brand culture, building differentiated commodity culture, building personalized marketing culture, and building quality culture. For the research on the positioning of city cultural brands, we can start from the brand positioning and the city brand positioning. City brand is a system integration that consists of political, economic, natural, and cultural elements. Against the background of

global regional economic integration, the era of brand-name city strategy has entered, and brand-name cities have won the competition. If a city wants to avoid being eliminated in fierce competition, it must operate like a brand and maintain a competitive edge through branding. Thus, the brand-city strategy has become a top priority in urban development. Some cities in China have already launched city branding strategies and achieved certain results, but there are still some outstanding problems. City brand positioning is one of the more prominent issues, and many cities' brand positioning is not clear enough.

City brand positioning is to find the position of city products in the selected city target market, and to occupy a specific position in the mind of city customers. (Qian, Gou, & Li, 2010). City brand positioning should follow the general principles of brand positioning as well as combining the specificity of the city. According to Professor Keller, brand positioning is about determining the best position for the brand in the customer's impression to maximise the potential benefits for the company (Kevin, 2009). Brand positioning is the core and soul of the whole brand strategy. City brand positioning is the refinement of the core values of the city, making it different from other city brands with an irreplaceable personality and characteristics. It is the foundation of the establishment of the whole city brand. The goal of city brand positioning is to obtain brand premium (Ma, 2006). The city brand positioning should abide by the five principles of authenticity, specificity, orientation, reputation, and recognition. City brand positioning can be divided into core brand, sub-core brand, and element brand (Li, 2003).

From a quantitative point of view, the selection of positioning factors can be done in two ways: one is based on the selection of the strength of the brand attributes of the resources, and the other is based on the preferences of the target audience. It can be divided into four types: ecological environment type, tourism type, capital agglomeration type, and product

(service) market type (Du &Yuan, 2004). In addition, city brand positioning can be divided into grade orientation, benefit orientation, consumer orientation, emotional orientation, cultural orientation, and personality orientation (Wang, 2006). Wu Yongchang (2002) empirically explains that the positioning of Xiamen as an 'art city' meets the three characteristics of marketing positioning: uniqueness, clarity, and effectiveness. There is little difference between the above analysis of city brand positioning and general brand positioning. Besides uniqueness and practicality, city brand positioning should pay attention to extensibility, that is, a city brand can drive an industrial cluster and the development of the surrounding areas of the city (City Development Research Group, Beijing International City Development Institute, 2002). This is worthy of affirmation, the city brand should form a brand umbrella, to the industrial brand, and the enterprise brand, to form a certain radiation and ductility. The main models of foreign city brand positioning are: Riess and Trout's positioning ideas and principles; Kotler's differential positioning model; Lovelock and Virts' service positioning model; The strategic positioning model of Acker and Zensby; Reich's positioning pattern. The enlightenment to our brand building is: we should strengthen the empirical research and quantitative research (Wu & Dai, 2010). Different researchers have conducted research on city cultural brand positioning from different angles and levels. Yuan Guangcai and Sun Xiangming are representative scholars who conduct research from the theoretical level, and they have discussed in detail the connotation, principles, and types of city cultural brand positioning. The cultural positioning of city brand is closely related to the marketing and communication of city brand. Scholars' theoretical elaboration from different angles lays a theoretical foundation for the positioning of city cultural brand and the development of subsequent studies. Some scholars also study the application of city cultural brand positioning to specific practices. As Du Yumin and Hu Jiyan (2012) put forward, the

analysis of city cultural resources and location advantages is the basis of the study of city cultural brand positioning, and only after detailed analysis can the city brand positioning be more realistic. When applying the city cultural brand positioning to the practical level, we should adhere to the principles of innovation, difference, sustainability, and dynamics based on the existing city cultural resources. Specific practical cases about brand positioning of city culture include: Hou Qing (2014) took Guangzhou as an example to discuss how Guangzhou can differentiate its positioning and dissemination from numerous city cultures. Wu Baohua (2015) proposed the goals and requirements for the brand positioning of city culture in Urumqi, Xinjiang, based on the actual situation of the city. So, the types and principles of city cultural brand positioning can be shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5： Scholars on Types and Principles of City Cultural Brand Positioning

Scholar	**Positioning Type**	**Positioning Principle**
Liu Yu	Unitary type	Differentiation
	Compound type	Guidance quality
	International integrated positioning	Systematicness
		Continuity
		Harmony
		Identity
Ren Jing	Physical geographic type	Differentiation
	Historical and cultural type	Continuity
	Industrial culture type	Dynamic
	Future innovation	
Hou Qing		Innovation
		Differentiation
		Sustainability
		Dynamic

Source: Author Collected

The positioning of the city's cultural brand is an indispensable and important part of the process of shaping a city's cultural brand, which is to determine the brand personality and cultural characteristics that are different from other cities. It refers to the design of the brand and the establishment of the brand image by clarifying the needs of the market; it can occupy a unique and important position in the minds of external viewers and citizens (Yang, 2016). Before building a cultural brand, it is necessary to extract the most unique and attractive content in the city, accurately grasp the positioning of the urban cultural brand, and consider injecting specific cultural resources into the brand to create cultural differences between the local urban cultural brand and those of other regions. Kevin Lynch points out that "any functioning city area has structure and character, but it is also divided into strengths and weaknesses." (Kevin Lynch, 2001). Based on the Chinese City Competitiveness Report and the literature of some domestic and international researchers, the city positioning of some international cities (Table 2.6) and the cultural brand positioning of some Chinese and other countries' cities (Tables 2.7 and 2.8) have been derived.

Table 2.6： Some International City Positioning

City or region	**Functional or image positioning**	**City or region**	**Functional or image positioning**
Oxford	University town	London	International Finance Centre
Sydney	Smart city	Tokyo	Cosmopolis
Singapore	Intelligent Island	New York	World city
Osaka	Fureai Sports Land	Paris	Fashion city
Venice	City on water	Vienna	Music city
Dalian	City of romance	Hong Kong	City in move
Milan	Fashion capital of the world	Shenzhen	Capital of entrepreneurship

Source: Author Collected

Table 2.7： List of the Cultural Brand Image of Some Foreign Cities

City name	Brand and identity	city name	Brand and identity
Los Angeles	The international film capital	Venice	City on water, square
Geneva	The International Conference capital	Vienna	Music city
Hanover	Fair City	Dubai	The sports city of the Middle East
Hawaii	World Capital of Adventure	Munich	Beer city
Bern	City of clocks and watches	Osaka	Fureai Sports Land

Source: Li Jiao, p.25

Table 2.8： List of Cultural Brands in Some Cities of China

city name	Brand and identity	city name	Brand and identity
Hong Kong	Asia's world city	Shanghai	City of Wisdom, Pearl of the Orient
Guangzhou	Flower City, the eastern port of origin of the Maritime Silk Road	Dalian	Garden City, football, clothing
Kunming	Spring city, the four seasons like spring	Hangzhou	Paradise on Earth, a leisure city
Nanjing	Stone City, the ancient capital of the Six Dynasties	Shenzhen	Dragon City, the capital of entrepreneurship
Changsha	Star City, entertainment culture	Chongqing	Mountain city

Source: Author Collected

The positioning of a city's cultural brand is a complex project. Comparing the surrounding cities with their advantageous resources, the most critical characteristic factors should be found out from the perspective of customers (Wu & Dai, 2010).

Regarding Xinyang City in China, we can construct a culturally rich and distinctive urban brand image by leveraging the city's unique developmental advantages and conducting practical research and analysis of target audiences. In the process of Xinyang's

urban development and management, it is essential to build its cultural brand around a single, highly representative theme.

2.5 The Strategy of Building City Culture Brand

2.5.1 The Importance of Building a City Cultural Brand

In today's world, mankind is entering the era of economic globalisation and diversification at an ever-increasing speed, and the competition and development of cities have become the focus of human attention. Against the background of economic globalisation and urbanisation, the development of modern cities has also entered the era of brand development, and the core competitiveness of cities has gradually shifted from economic construction to the construction of city brands centred on city culture. In the process of city cultural development, international market competition and regional competition have changed from product competition to cultural brand competition.

City culture has an inestimable value in shaping city brand image and plays a powerful role in improving and promoting the construction of city brand image in all aspects. As each city is different in terms of its level of development, history, culture and natural resource endowment, the problems and challenges it faces are as follows: To pursue rapid economic development, cities adopt blindly modernization, which will lead to a single copy of city modules, fall into the awkward situation of city landscape convergence, and lack of their characteristics. The root of these problems lies in the lack of positioning and shaping of the city's cultural brand. To be invincible in the increasingly fierce city competition, every city is actively exploring city cultural branding, and the creation of a city brand with deep regional characteristics and cultural connotations has become an important element of city development in the new era.

Culture is the root and soul of a city and provides the inexhaustible driving force for city development. Culture is like water, moistening things silently. Culture is also a unique business card and brand symbol that distinguishes a city from other cities. It has become a spiritual symbol of city image construction and external communication, highlighting the spiritual temperament and unique connotation of the city. Shaping the city's cultural brand helps to form a strong penetration and cohesion within the city, has a strong appeal and radiation outside the city, and has a strong driving and promoting effect on economic and social development. Therefore, the shaping of a city brand image with distinctive cultural characteristics and cultural connotations has become an important strategic goal and a major issue in the current new round of urban competition (Cui, 2017). City culture is the driving force of city development, is an important symbol of city development level, can effectively shape the image of the city, and is an important guarantee to promote the sustainable development of the city. Cultural brand is the most shining and charming golden signboard of a city, carrying the city's spiritual character and ideal pursuit. The level of communication of a city's cultural brand also directly affects the visibility and reputation of the city's external image. Huang Zhenping (2008) believes that the cultural brand is an important content and the main indicator of the city's cultural soft power, the competition of the city is to a certain extent the competition of the cultural brand, and it is necessary to shape and build the cultural brand as a strategic initiative to understand, implement, and become a cultural city, cultural city construction of the specific action. Cities should innovate old brands, shape new brands, and actively build cultural brand groups and cultural brand systems.

City brand is the concentrated embodiment of city image, represents the core competitiveness of the city, embodies its unique value concept and aesthetic taste, and reflects the city's spiritual style and cultural taste. As an effective way to highlight the city's

personality and characteristic culture, carefully building city brands plays an increasingly prominent role in city development strategy. The city's cultural brand is a kind of intangible asset that can increase continuously with time, and it is also a precious cultural heritage that a city can inherit and carry forward. The city cultural brand with profound cultural connotation will become the witness of the city's historical and cultural progress, and even become a cultural landmark of a city so that people can have a sense of cultural belonging and regional identity. Therefore, digging deep into the city's historical and cultural resources and building cultural brands have become an important strategic measure for the cultural revitalization of the city, and innovative communication of cultural brands has become an important path to show the charm of the city (Chang, 2018).

2.5.2 Research on the Shaping and Dissemination of City Cultural Brand

City cultural brands are products extracted by city builders from the city's unique natural and cultural endowments and historical heritage, and then provide credible cultural value commitments to city stakeholders to enhance their sense of identity and belonging to city cultural brands (Van Puyen Broeck et al., 2021). Most scholarly studies establish a correlation between city cultural brands and the construction/dissemination of urban image, suggesting that these branding efforts constitute a critical dimension of contemporary city image management.

Andrea Insch (2011) points out that in the process of city brand building, the role of city residents in shaping and promoting the city brand should be paid attention to, otherwise it may damage the goals and intentions of the city's initial brand strategy. It emphasizes that city residents play an important role in the establishment of city brands because they always "live and breathe" the city's brand identity. Residents' attitudes, place attachment, and lived experiences (encompassing living, working, and leisure activities) directly shape visitors'

perceptions through behavioral feedback loops. The human capital endowment of residents—including specialized talents, technical competencies, and entrepreneurial vitality—serves as both a driver of regional socioeconomic prosperity and an accretive factor in urban brand equity valuation. Therefore, residents can also be regarded as an important carrier of city image building.

Culture and entertainment have also proved to play an important role in place and city branding. This role is reflected in the emphasis placed on these new cultural areas in city promotional materials, highlighting cultural events, festivals, and cultural 'flagship' programmes that can provide 'exciting' entertainment opportunities. In particular, the organisation of small or large-scale arts, sports, and other types of events and festivals is seen as contributing to the building and strengthening of local brands. For example, the fierce competition between cities to become European Capitals of Culture requires increased investment. In addition, throughout Europe, the transformation of disused industrial areas into cultural and entertainment districts is seen as an important 'method' of regeneration and a means of revitalising local economies. Lim, H. (2016) made a detailed analysis and discussion on the contribution of festivals to city brands. By examining the role of cultural festivals in the process of city branding, He concluded that less government involvement and more private sponsorship provided the context for the festival to make a greater contribution to the city's brand.

Cultural heritage can be used as a factor in the marketing strategy of historic cities in Europe. Internal marketing can be considered the most important part of a city's marketing strategy. The long-term prosperity of the city will depend on internal marketing. The largest interest group in the city is the local community, which is also the greatest value of the city. Even the most professional and well-prepared marketing strategy is not successful without

extensive compromise and participation from residents (Karmowska, 2003). Cultural production, recreation and the value of the city's identity also play a very important role and are necessary elements of a city's successful city branding. Culture in the form of city history, architecture, cultural facilities, and cultural activities is a major component of city promotion activities（Kunzmann，2004）. Culture can also enhance a city’s identity. As Kunzmann puts it: “In the age of globalization, art is the only local asset that shows the differences between cities, apart from landscape features..... Cultural content remains the last bastion of local identity”. As Zukin（2004）discusses, many cities around the world are currently rebuilding or revitalizing with more culture-related activities. This strategy is utilised to enhance the identity of the city's citizens, increase the city's visibility and promote the city's economic development（Mihalis, K. ,2005).

With the shaping and dissemination of the city's image and the projection of global news media, the City’s cultural brand has gradually shaped the overall image and charm of the city (Kovacic et al., 2019; Luqman et al., 2020). City cultural brand is an important part of city governance. How to use the city's cultural brand strategy to drive city development and enhance city influence is the key to achieving high-quality city development (Ye and Bjorner, 2018). Research on the brand value of city culture shows that its development is closely related to city marketing events and festivals. On the one hand, city marketing activities often rely on the city’s development concept and value pursuit to promote sales (Wang, 2019; Li & Katsumata, 2020); On the other hand, major festivals such as exhibitions, celebrations, cultural activities, sports events, shopping centres, etc. constitute the core cultural representations of the city and become the core of enhancing the value of the city's cultural brands (Gomez et al., 2018; Ye et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023).

Of course, public libraries and university libraries also play an important role in the construction of the city's cultural soft power and the city's cultural brand building（Xiao，2020; Li，2014）. The likes of New York or London, with leading international city brands, have always focused on their flagship museums and their designs as the main drivers representing the cultural vitality of the city. Cities such as Manchester or Bilbao have also used museums as branding tools to transform their city image as cities of industrial heritage（Kim, S. Y., & Hands, D.,2018). In addition, there are studies on the development model of city cultural brands from the macro level, such as city cultural landscape (Wang & Gu, 2020), city space design (Ghahremani et al.,2021), and city living environment (Tappert et al., 2018). Unlike cities that are naturally formed with social development, city culture brands need to be shaped and polished by human beings. At present, China's city cultural branding is still in the exploratory stage, and there is neither a construction theory with general guiding significance nor practical experience with extensive promotional value. By analysing the current situation of China's city cultural branding, Gao Yinggang and Cong Xiaoyu (2019) identified the basic principles for shaping China's city cultural branding based on the dual attributes of ‘cultural branding’ and ‘city branding’ (Table 2.9).

Table 2.9： The Basic Principles of Shaping Chinese City Cultural Brands

The basic principle of connotation construction Angle	**Basic principles of management**
First, the setting of construction objectives must adhere to the principle of social benefits first.	First, the design of the brand image must adhere to the cultural tradition and the principle of fashion trends.
Secondly, the construction of brand elements must adhere to the principle of cultural value priority.	Secondly, the promotion of cultural brands must adhere to the principle of both inheritance and maintenance, and reform and innovation.

Source: Gao Yinggang and Cong Xiaoyu (2019)

They believe that ‘cultural branding’ focuses on connotation construction and ‘city branding’ focuses on management, and that the two are complementary and indispensable. Specific paths for City cultural branding are proposed (Table 2.10). These principles and paths can promote the overall healthy growth of urban cultural branding, thus fundamentally promoting the benign development of China's urbanisation process.

Table 2.10： The Concrete Path of City Cultural Brand Shaping

Global path	
“From the point to the surface, everywhere flowering,” overall construction route	
Concrete path	
(1) Based on their cultural resources	(2) Accurately positioning the city brand
(3) Formulate brand planning in detail	(4) Conscientiously implementing the implementation plan

Source: Gao Yinggang and Cong Xiaoyu (2019)

Culture is playing an increasingly important role in the construction of cities. Many cities around the world use cultural construction as a tool for city development. Wealth can be created through cultural activities, such as creative design in various fields such as music, dance, art, exhibitions, museums, and sports（Zukin，2004）. Moreover, creativity in the arts can enhance the overall cultural vitality and the social quality of life (Adams and Goldbard, 2000). At present, the cultural competition between cities is the key to competition. The concept of exploring and practicing the soft power of city culture has replaced the concept of economic strength as the core competitiveness, and it has become the consensus of current city development to shape the cultural brand of the city with culture and stimulate the vitality of city innovation.

The construction of the city's cultural brand in the new period mainly comes from the city’s cultural supply and people’s cultural demand. Tan Fuqiang et al. (2023) believe

that the construction of the city cultural brand is the organic combination of multiple city supply and people's subjective initiative， Exploring from the dual dimensions of urban cultural supply and people's cultural needs, it emphasises the need to continuously integrate the 'strategic wisdom' of urban innovation and development in the new era in the process of urban development, improve urban life and cultural supply, accurately 'capture' residents' needs, and realise the two-way interaction between the city and people in the living space and cultural space. They creatively analysed the construction logic of Ocean City's cultural brand from the perspectives of spatial empathy and cultural memory.

To brand cities as cultural elements, city marketers use different resources and strategies, Like Selda Uca Ozer（2016）lists some strategies implemented by cities that have become brands through cultural display: First, Creating Architectural Design and Iconic Structures; Second, Creating a Cultural Image and Slogan; Third, Organizing Cultural Festivals; Fourth, Organizing Mega Events; Fifth, Cultural Thematization; Sixth, Featuring the Cultural Identity; Seventh, Utilization of Museums for Branding; Eighth, Utilizing Historical Stories in Marketing; Ninth, City Transformation and Planning; Tenth, Cultural Flagships Investments; Finally, Capitals of Culture. Based on the theoretical background, Ji, Won Bae et al. (2021) proposed the 4Ps of cultural city brand building according to Simon Anholt's 6PS and Ikuta, Yukawa, and Hamassaki (2007), as shown in Table 2.11.

Table 2.11： The 4P of City Cultural Brand Construction

4P	Definition	Objective
Promotion activity	Local celebrations, festivals, conferences, and events	Provide opportunities to participate in and experience city entities
Product display	Products, representative products	Share city identity through representative products
Place	Scenic spots, professional streets, and city design	The personality, impressions, and memories of a place
People	Residents, local influencers, and local celebrities	Communicate, interact, and build relationships with local people

Source: Ji, W. B. et al (2021)

In addition to the above strategies, of course, there are many other strategies to shape and spread city cultural brands. For instance, virtual reality technology can be used to conduct spatial narration to obtain public perception of city cultural brands (Rzeszewski and Naji, 2022), and cultural heritage documentaries can be used to reconstruct historical scenes to enhance public perception of city cultural brands (Mozaffari and Zarandona, 2022). Through the study of city space, cities can use the integration of the surrounding natural and human environment to create spatial characteristics and enhance the public sense of the city's cultural brand (El Darwish, 2022). Familiar social forms, lifestyles, and cultural customs can help the public form a sense of dependence, identity, and belonging to the city, thus shaping the public's cognition of the city's cultural brand (Chen et al.2020).

Kotler, Haider, and Rein (1993) view a city as an industry, with its future as its product. They identify the four key elements of the cultural marketing strategy as (1) the image of a city, (2) local characteristics, (3) infrastructure construction, and (4) marketing using a celebrity. Tsen-Yao Chang et al (2012) explored the possibility of using cultural products as a city marketing strategy through research, arguing that cultural products are an

emotional and commercial tool that combines cultural characteristics and creative design concepts to attract tourists. They also play an important cultural and historical legacy role in the development of city image visualisation and the use of storytelling capabilities as a city marketing strategy. Ultimately, it provides city planners, designers and policy makers with a perspective on the importance of cultural communication media through products.

Hankinson (2007) provides five guiding principles for destination brands based on the corporate brand theory. He believes that "there are many similarities between corporate branding and destination branding, and useful lessons can be learned from corporate branding," and believes that effective destination branding depends on (a) strong and visionary leadership, (b) a brand-oriented organizational culture, (c) department coordination and process alignment, and (c) a sense of continuity. (d) consistent communication among numerous stakeholders, and (e) strong and compatible partnerships.

Cities invest in cultural development, arts, creative industries, festivals and other events to develop a range of opportunities as an overarching strategy to compete in global cities. Investing in arts and creativity as a strategy for urban development can be compared to a corporation's strategy of investing in the arts for business growth. Cities can contribute to urban development by leveraging arts and creativity in areas such as marketing, branding, public relations, corporate social responsibility, human resources, research and innovation, and production (Cudny, W., Comunian, R., & Wolaniuk, A.,2020). Cultural activities, as a product of creative industries, are also a key element of local branding strategies, "enhance the international image of the city and attract tourists" (Quinn, 2005). An additional aspect is that in our time, there is a segment of the city population that acts as tourists in their cities and explicitly demands leisure (Lloyd & Clark, 2001). The Principality of Monaco is a good example, because during the winter, the low tourist season, cultural institutions such as the

Philharmonic opera house, cinemas, and the opening of art exhibitions are mainly open to the city's residents. The main role of culture is that it can strengthen social cohesion, increase personal confidence, improve life skills, enhance people's capacity as democratic citizens, and develop new employment and training opportunities (Landry, 2000).

Fourteen cities in Europe host annual cultural city festivals and use them to build and renovate cultural facilities (such as the renovation of the Prado Museum in Madrid in 1992) and repackage their cultural routes（Evans, 2003). In addition, cultural and creative products play an important role in city branding. Chang Tsen-Yao (2012) believes that cultural products are popular tools representing local culture. They translate information, narrate memories and historical events, and make emotional connections with people. Through the research, the author clearly understands the dynamic relationship between cultural products, city heritage, and city marketing, and proposes that the design of cultural products can enhance the city image and city regeneration, enhance the potential of cultural narrative, and finally provide practical designers, city planners, and policymakers with a view of the importance of cultural communication media through products. The development of the cultural industry must expand the thinking to create the cultural significance and cultural value of characteristic economic products, with cultural brands as the primary task（Zhang & Wei, 2007). The design of the Museum of Modern Art (e.g., the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) and its exhibition themes as an offshoot of the city's cultural offerings was given aesthetic and social significance by Barry and Bell（Barry, 2008）.

Influenced by the rapid development of the TV industry, film industry, and Internet industry in the 1990s, the cultural and creative industry has obtained huge economic benefits,

brought new development opportunities to developed countries, and exported national culture. The influence of cultural and creative industries has covered various fields, and it is a key industry that any country needs to pay attention to. The Cultural and creative industry is the soul of a city and plays a positive role in shaping and disseminating the city's brand. In different environments, each city has a different growth process, and its cultural heritage has its own characteristics. Based on cultural heritage, city brand construction, and city culture inheritance, it should be combined with the cultural and creative industry to spread and shape the city brand. Combining the characteristics of the city, clarifying the positioning of the city brand, building and developing cultural and creative industries in the direction of quality and standardisation, promoting the development of cultural and creative industries, accelerating the speed of city brand dissemination and shaping, realising the integration of cultural and creative industries, enhancing the value of the city brand, and setting up a good image of the city brand in the course of continuous exploration and practice; and facilitating the construction of the city's economy (Li,2021).

An excellent city brand visual image is the visual carrier of a city’s cultural concept, but also an effective means to enhance the soft power and influence of city culture. (Sun, 2012). According to Zhang Aipeng (2020), the city logo is one of the cores of the visual image shaping of the city brand, which is an important part of the city's external publicity and development strategy. The visual image of the city brand is a carrier of regional history and culture, playing a crucial role in the dissemination and enhancement of the city's influence. Therefore, excellent city logo design can not only inherit and disseminate city culture, display city image and enhance city reputation, but also improve the sense of belonging and honour of city people and improve the overall quality of city people. It has positive significance for promoting city development and city marketing.

Through the refinement and in-depth expression of cultural elements, the city image can better display the spirit and charm of the city from the artistic level, which is the precious wealth of city culture and the source of the vitality of the city (Ni, 2014). Kavaratzis (2004; 2008) proposed a theoretical framework for city image construction, which comprises three stages of image communication. **Primary communication** involves the city's physical and cultural behaviors, such as architecture, museums, public art, urban design, and overall perception. This stage also encompasses the long-term vision articulated by local leaders and managers. **Secondary communication** refers to all forms of formal and intentional communication, such as advertising, public relations, official logos, and slogans. **Tertiary communication** consists of uncontrolled marketing efforts, including word-of-mouth advertising and voluntary media coverage.

While adopting the marketing mix recommended by general marketing, distinguish four different local improvement strategies that are the basis for building a competitive advantage. (1). Design (place as feature), (2). Infrastructure (place as fixed environment), (3). Basic services (as a venue for service providers) and (4). attractions (as a venue for entertainment and leisure) (Kotler et al.,1999, cited in Kavaratzis,2008). Hubbard and Hall (1998, cited in Kavaratzis,2008) also describe a general entrepreneurial model of city governance. As the goal of this model, they set out to reshape the image of places and transform formerly productive cities into spectacular consumer cities. According to the same author, the achievement of these goals is achieved through specific policies, which include: (1) Advertising and promotion. (2) Large-scale physical reconstruction. (3) public art and civic statues, (4) Large-scale events. (5) Cultural regeneration, and finally. (6) Public-private partnerships. Although these policies are not the most comprehensive, they include several most important aspects of rebuilding the image.

Rehan (2014) believes that culture should be integrated into city brand building through several strategies at different levels. Tools to use include logos, slogans, and websites for media coverage; Libraries, museums, and landmarks designed to highlight iconic and historic buildings, and cultural activities used to brand city life. The specific strategy framework of culture in city brand strategy is shown in Figure 2.3 (Reference from Rehan,2014). From the Western perspective, urban cultural branding is not only a marketing tool but also a core strategy for the construction of urban identity, economic regeneration, and social cohesion. Western cities often shape their urban images through the media, using landmarks as super symbols of cultural capital, outputting the ideology of slogans, and highlighting the dual role of branding public Spaces, etc.

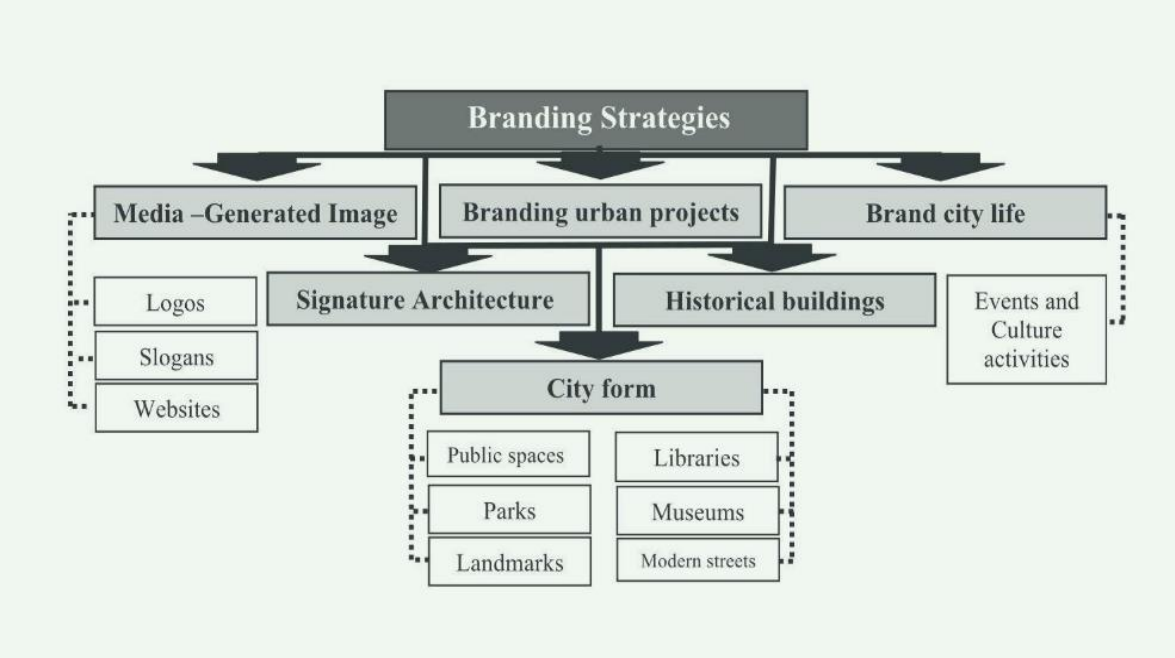


Figure 2.3： Culture in City Branding Strategies

(Source: Rehan, 2014, p.225)

Based on the comparison of the understanding of urban cultural branding between China and the West, a comparison table can be provided here (Table 2.12).

Table 2.12： Comparison of Cultural Branding Strategies for China & Western

Comparison dimension	**Chinese perspective**	**Western perspective**
Cultural structure	Material culture layer spiritual culture layer institutional culture layer	Material carrier Virtual carrier Activity carrier
Brand carrier	The main material carrier thought expression	Media generation image Super symbol Revitalization of Public Spaces
Sponsorship and Events-Strategic Tools	Cultural stratified guidance planning Integration of institutional culture	Logo Slogan marketing Branding of Public Spaces

Source: Author Collected

Li Jiao (2009) introduced the theory of the City Culture Identity System (CCIS) as the theoretical guidance for city cultural brand building. The so-called City Culture Identity System (CCIS) includes three aspects, namely, the city concept identification System (Mind Identity System), the Behaviour Identity system (Behaviour Identity System, and the image identification system (Visual Identity system) System). She believes that to establish the city cultural brand and create a complete city cultural brand image, it is to start from the three aspects of city concept identification (MI), behaviour identification (BI), and image identification (VI) on the premise of introducing the city image identification system, and carry out all the activities related to city cultural brand shaping through various forms. City CCIS theory can effectively guide the shaping of city cultural brands in a comprehensive way: it can help the city to position the image of city cultural brand, determine the identification system of city image, and establish its city brand. The image of a city needs a complete set of city image identification systems to build, through a variety of city cultural

behaviours to show a clear idea of city culture, to see and touch the visual image to show the city's positioning. City brand building itself is a systematic project, which requires in-depth study of all aspects of the city's MI, BI, and VI, integration of various factors through scientific practices and analyses, systematic coordination, and complementary promotion.

After the city brand is determined, it is necessary to publicise, disseminate, inculcate, and infiltrate the brand concept, style, and image through media publicity, optimise the style of city construction, shape the city's image, organise ceremonies, and even determine the city festivals and the city's municipal flower, to make it widely known. Let it be widely known. Only in this way can we give full play to the cultural power of the city brand (Li, 2003).

In the process of establishing a brand, brand communication occupies a very important position. The dissemination of city cultural brands refers to the process of shaping, promoting, marketing, and disseminating city cultural brands through traditional radio, television, magazines, newspapers, and emerging media, such as the Internet and digital media, using certain communication methods and means. Effective communication is the key to establishing the brand of city culture (Li, 2009). Yu Mingyang (2004) believed that the communication of city brands should be carried out by advertising and public relations like enterprises, and adopt the means of combining business and diplomacy. From the perspective of city publicity, he discussed the internal and external communication of city brand building and proposed that City branding should borrow the concept of integrated communication, not only to a variety of communication channels and use, but also the government public relations, advertising campaigns, education and guidance and other ways to make comprehensive use of, to achieve the maximum efficiency of communication. Qian Zhihong et al. (2005) explored the image-based city development strategy in developed

countries. The core idea is to treat the city as a special commodity that can be operated and marketed, apply marketing theories and business concepts, and shape and market a city image with rich connotations using advertising, planning of major events, and creation of the physical landscape of the city, to attract capital investment, industrial settlement, residence, and tourism, and to achieve the purpose of revitalising the city's economy.

Using the practice of promoting city living in Washington, D.C., as an example, Gibson (2005) explores how city leaders can attract subcity target market groups to settle in the city by building a city brand. From the perspective of city assets, Yu Ning pointed out that city brand assets should be regarded as an important component of city competitiveness and competitive advantage, and the management and construction of city brand assets should be carried out in line with the ideas of development, communication, and maintenance (Yu, 2007).

Some scholars have explored the driving mechanism of internal brands in the formation of city brands, and believe that their driving role is manifested in two aspects: firstly, these internal brands have a strong driving role, which can greatly increase the visibility of the city brand; and secondly, stakeholders can obtain some kind of associations with the city from the brand's consumption experience within the city (Zhang Yi et al., 2006). Some suggestions are offered for the innovative dissemination of city cultural brands. The integrated communication of city cultural brands is the integrated communication of city cultural communication subjects, communication content, communication forms, communication channels, and communication effects. Integrating the concept of integrated brand communication into city cultural brand communication, effectively integrating the main body, content, form, channel, and effect of city cultural brand communication, and building a systematic integrated brand communication system is a key part of the strategy of

enhancing the value of city cultural brand. At the same time, the largest group of people should cultivate the main consciousness of "everyone's participation and universal communication", not only reflect the spirit of the city in daily behaviour, but also actively produce innovative content through Internet media, integrate the transmission of the city's brand image into the daily use of media, and actively spread city culture (Ren Jing（2020）.

In the age of information explosion， the role of the media and the public sphere in shaping city discourse is considered most important. Some cities in China use short videos to spread city image and build city brand, and discusses the short video promotion strategy, such as the Zibo explosion phenomenon, it is proposed that in the short video content, there should be rich expression, language content and colour creativity that the audience can easily understand, and fashion elements and cultural symbols that conform to the current trend. In terms of communication channels, short videos can be promoted on major online social networking platforms such as Dou Yin, Kuai Shou, and Weibo, so that more people can receive the content of short videos. Finally, in terms of communication objects, the short videos produced should also be adjusted and optimized according to the characteristics, preferences, needs, and interests of the target population. In general, to improve the communication effect of short videos, we need to pay attention to the optimization of their content form, promotion channels, and communication objects when producing short videos. This requires good aesthetic, marketing, and publicity strategies. Keep short videos updated and upgraded to better promote city development (Zhang, 2023). The communication mechanism of city images in short videos mainly relies on algorithm recommendation, meme replication, and detonation factor aggregation. When shaping the city image with the help of a short video, we should pay attention to creating city-characteristic IP, plan the communication strategy, actively guide the hot spots of communication, pay attention to the

power of the masses, strengthen the linkage between the official and the private, and expand the city image communication matrix (Sun & Zhang, 2022).

Due to the increasing number of users of short video platforms, the communication of city image on short video platforms can adopt innovative strategies. For example, Deng Yuanbing and Zhao Luhong (2019) combined the Sympathize, Identify, Participate, Share & Spread (SIPS) model and proposed a new strategy for short video to help city image dissemination: (1) Short video city image communication focuses on empathy, (2) mainstream media, official accounts and user word-of-mouth drive value recognition, (3) pay attention to user participation experience and interaction to promote secondary communication, (4) break platform barriers and expand the scope of secondary communication. Short video platforms can also be linked with other new media platforms in the Internet era to expand communication groups. Finally, promote the deep, systematic, and all-around communication of the city image, and explore the new mode of city image communication.

The tourism website, as one of the main channels of city marketing, reflects and curates the core values and popular culture themes of the best places and events in the city. The visual content of the site influences and creates a brand message from the city's perspective; The visual story of cities on travel sites, some famous cities focus on their flagship museums and their designs as a key driver to present the city as culturally vibrant. The use of museums as a branding tool has changed the city image of some cities based on industrial heritage, and the visual stories of cities on tourism websites frame the city as a cultural destination and can be seen as a strategic design. Finally, they argue that coding theory could be considered to build a more robust and clear design platform to improve

visual content and its narrative message to a wider audience in support of city branding (Seo Young Kim,2018).

Through the research on the shaping and dissemination of city cultural brands in the country's first large-scale city cultural tourism brand competition show "Charm Chinatown", Chang Ling Chong（2018）concludes that it is necessary to constantly innovate in the form of the program, carry out intensive cultivation in the content of the program, create cross-screen interaction in external communication, and deeply integrate culture, resources, creativity, investment and other elements. Promote China's city cultural brand building, city image construction and promotion, and the transformation and upgrading of the tourism industry. Xing Huibin et al（2018）analysed and summarized the previous research results and extracted the successful ingredients. From the perspective of cultural tourism destination branding, they compared France as the most famous cultural tourism destination, with the largest number of international tourists, and compared it with Hebei. Finally, combining the actual situation of Hebei and the actual tourism demand of the market segment, the paper puts forward the conceptual brand-building model of Hebei cultural tourism.

Zhang Ge (2020) considers that "new folk song" has considerable advantages in spreading city cultural brands through multi-level analysis. He thinks about the relevant issues of spreading "new folk song" and shaping city cultural brands, and believes that promoting the advantages of "new folk song" can better promote the shaping of city brands. The shaping and dissemination of a high-quality city brand cannot be separated from the broad vision and the thinking concept of the city administrators who keep pace with the times, which requires the spokespersons and gatekeepers of the city to judge the time and situation, to develop the city culture with personality, and to disseminate the city culture

brand. As the songs are melodious and the lyrics are catchy, every city can shape and spread its own city culture brand through city songs with cultural characteristics.

The shaping and dissemination of city cultural brand is a complex systematic project, which needs to reflect the cultural connotation and spiritual essence of the city in all aspects. To locate the city correctly and feel the pulse of development, the history and tradition of the city must not be ignored, but the cultural connotation of the city must be deeply explored. City cultural branding should focus on the excavation of image connotation and the reasonable choice of image carrier. At the same time, the relationship between the regional positioning of the cultural brand and the image shaping should be handled carefully, so that they can support each other and play a mutually beneficial and win-win role. Whether the choice and design of image are appropriate will directly affect the strength and breadth of brand dissemination (Cong, 2019).

2.6 Learn About Xinyang

Understanding Xinyang, a different city, a city rich in history: Xinyang has more than 2,000 years of construction history, is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilisation, the important birthplace of the Huaihe River culture, the Central Plains culture and the Chu culture mingled and coexisted here, brewing Xinyang's unique ‘Yu style and Chu rhyme’. Thousands of years of development have given birth to the rich historical and cultural deposits of Xinyang.

Leisurely history creates charm in Xinyang

Xinyang has been known as the ‘Chinese overseas Chinese hometown, Fujian and Taiwan ancestral land’ with a reputation. in June 2015, a group of nearly 70 people with roots from Malaysia, Cambodia, Taiwan, and other regions travelled to Xinyang to explore

their heritage. The Malaysian Li's clansmen association president and director, Dato' Lee Fook Seng, said with emotion: ‘Xinyang is the fiefdom of Gao Tao, the ancestor of the Li Clan, and a place we greatly admire.’ Xinyang, as one of the Hakka's ancestral lands, has 13 major surnames among the Han Chinese surnames, such as Huang, Luo, Jiang, and Lai, and more than 20 minor surnames that originated or flourished in Xinyang. In recent years, the ‘Roots Culture’ has promoted deepening ties between Xinyang and Fujian, Taiwan, and overseas regions, and has become an important window and bridge. 8,000 years ago, there was a considerable scale of primitive agriculture on both sides of the Huai River in Xinyang, and there are many sites of Peiligang culture, Longshan culture, and Qu Jialing culture, which are distributed from east to west. As early as the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, Shen, Xi, Xian, Huang, Jiang, Liao, Lai, Jiang, and other states and fiefdoms were established here (Old camphor xy67896789, 2015).

During the Spring and Autumn Period, the state of Chu destroyed the vassal states such as Shen and Xi, and built counties such as Shen and Xi, which was one of the earliest places in the country to build counties, and was the foreign capital of the state of Chu during the Warring States Period (the site of the present Ping Qiao District of Xinyang), since then, the culture of the state of Chu and the culture of the Central Plains intersected here, forming the unique Huai culture.

Cheng Yang Cheng Site Museum, located in Ping Qiao District, Xinyang City, is the largest and best-preserved ancient city site with important archaeological value among the six existing “King Cities of Chu” in China, covering 532 pieces (sets) of cultural relics in various categories, such as bronzes, pottery, wood lacquer, jade, burial display, miscellaneous items, etc.

In 1957, the first and most complete set of bells of the Warring States period was unearthed in the No.1 tomb of Chu Wangcheng in Xinyang, and when China's first artificial satellite was launched in 1970, the music of 'The East is Red' played by it also resounded in the sky, and bronze bells were unearthed in 2002, which are regarded as rare treasures (Xinyang City People's Government, 2023).

The folk customs are honest and thick, carrying a heavy cultural heritage

In the long history, the land of Xinyang has nurtured many historical celebrities: a generation of famous minister Sun Shuao (now Huaibin County), making the land and water rich, he designed and presided over the construction of Yi Si bei (bei), is the earliest large-scale water conservancy project in ancient China. Chen Yuanguang (Gushi), the "king of Kaizhang" and Wang Shenzhi (Gushi) of the Tang Dynasty spread the civilization of the Central Plains to Fujian, Taiwan and other places. He Jingming (Shi He District), who advocated "writing will be Qin and Han, poetry will be prosperous Tang", was the leader of the "first seven sons" in the Ming Dynasty. "Mend the sheep after the death", Zi Lu Jin, Sima Guang smashed the jar, Song Shijie complained, Mrs. Xi, Silence for three years, and other historical stories occurred in Xinyang.

Under the influence of Chu Yun, Xinyang's folk intangible cultural heritage is also very rich. Xinyang folk songs and Luo Shan shadow play have been included in the nationa l intangible cultural heritage list. Wen Shu Township in Guang Shan County has been nam ed "the Hometown of Chinese Folk Art" by the Ministry of Culture. The folk art of Dabie Mountain, such as Dabie book, flower drum play, painted clay sculpture, paper cutting, clot h carving, and feather decoration, also shows the rich folk customs of Dabie Mountain.

Xinyang tea culture has a long history. Xinyang tea originated in the Eastern Zhou Dynasty and flourished in the Tang Dynasty. The Book of Tea, written by Lu Yu, a tea sage in the Tang Dynasty, listed Xinyang as one of the eight major tea-producing areas in China. In the 1915 Panama World Expo, Xinyang Mao Jian won the gold medal, and has been famous at home and abroad since then. Located in the hometown of famous tea, Xinyang people are particularly fond of tea, and the strong tea culture atmosphere is also very similar to that in the south. Here, every year, will hold a large tea culture festival, which has been held 32 times. Tea culture has long been integrated into the collective memory of Xinyang people.

2.7 Theoretical framework

The construction of urban cultural brands is centered on the theory of urban cultural brands. The theory of urban cultural brands includes the core creative strategy dimension and global cultural brand trends. The core creative strategy dimension encompasses aspects such as cultural resource exploration, visual symbol innovation, and industrial integration paths. Global cultural brand trends include digital communication and local expression (shown in Figure 2.4).

Cultural resources are the foundation of urban cultural brands. Through an in-depth exploration of cultural resources such as the city's history, traditional skills, and folk customs, the unique cultural connotations and values of the city can be identified. Exploring cultural resources enables the city to have a profound cultural heritage as a support when shaping the brand, thereby creating a cultural brand with individuality and recognition.

Visual symbols are the intuitive manifestation of urban cultural brands. Innovative visual symbols can make urban cultural brands stand out among numerous brands. Industrial integration is an important approach for the development of urban cultural brands.

Integrating the cultural industry with other industries such as tourism, technology, and sports can expand the industrial chain of urban cultural brands and create more economic value and social benefits. The cultural industry is an important part of the national economy. Developing urban cultural industries and creating characteristic urban brands is an inevitable way to promote the effective combination of various urban resources and enhance the overall image of the city. Studying the role of developing cultural industries in building urban brands is both the practical aspect of urban marketing and highlighting the differentiated development of cities, and the realistic need to achieve the leapfrog development of cultural industries. (Wang,2009)

Focusing on global cultural brand trends enables urban cultural brands to align with international standards and enhance the international influence of the city. With the development of globalization, cultural brands exhibit trends such as diversification, individualization, and digitalization. Cities need to keep up with these trends and continuously adjust and improve their cultural brand strategies to meet the demands of the international market.

In the digital age, digital communication is crucial for the dissemination of urban cultural brands. By leveraging digital technologies such as the Internet, social media, and virtual reality, urban cultural brand information can be rapidly and widely disseminated to all corners of the world. Gibson, using the practice of promoting urban life in Washington D.C., USA, as an example, conducted a preliminary exploration of how urban leaders can attract suburban target market groups to settle in the city by shaping the city's brand (Gibson,2005).

Localization Expression refers to adhering to global cultural brand trends while highlighting the local characteristics and cultural connotations of the city. Each city has its

unique history, geography, and cultural environment. Only by integrating these local elements into the cultural brand can a city culture brand with unique charm and competitiveness be created.

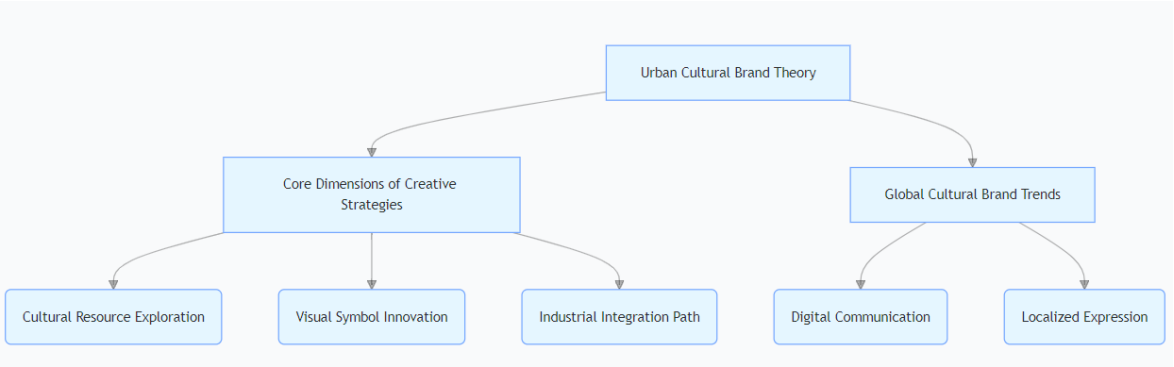


Figure 2.4： Theoretical framework

(Source: Author created)

2.8 Case Study on City Cultural Brand Practice

City cultural brand is the core cultural concept that a city adopts a series of historical and cultural symbols, city cultural precipitation, industrial economic symbols, humanistic ecological environment, and other elements as communication carriers in the process of promoting its city image according to the strategic positioning of city development, and transmits to the public through effective mass communication (Song, 2014). City cultural brand is the result of the acceleration of the urbanization process to promote the city to realize the brand, and after repositioning and packaging the soft power of the city, it can produce new added value. The main purpose of cultural branding is to create associations in the minds of actual and potential visitors as well as the public with the city's rich cultural and artistic heritage and various recreational/leisure activities. The power of a brand is that it can create powerful associations that make almost everything in a city symbolic in addition to its functional value (Alexa, 2012, January). Therefore, the city is not

only a place for human survival and development but also can be regarded as a huge commodity. The development of a city is no longer simply to stay on the surface of beautifying the city environment, but to attract the eyes of the world and provide great impetus for promoting the development of local core values, which all drive the city to create and package itself beautifully like a commodity, and give it a unique position in the global market after cultural branding. If a city wants to have its cultural brand and make the city's cultural brand sustainable, it is important to excavate and develop the cultural characteristics of the city.

Zeng, W. J. (2009) believes that to successfully achieve the industrialization of urban culture, it is necessary to build urban cultural brands, utilize the brand effect to shape the urban image, expand urban visibility and influence, achieve the integration of culture with the market, and complete the transformation of culture into capital. He believes that the implementation of scientific strategic management of city cultural brands and the penetration of strategic management ideas into the overall planning and long-term construction of the city are the necessary means and strategies to complete the docking and transformation. Cultural industry is an important part of the national economy, and the development of a city's cultural industry and the creation of a special city brand an inevitable way to promote the effective combination of various resources in the city and enhance the overall image of the city (Wang, 2009). Studying the role of the development of the cultural industry in building city brands is the meaning of practicing city marketing and highlighting the differentiated development of cities, and it is also a realistic need to realize the leapfrog development of the cultural industry.

The process of urban cultural branding involves expressing a city's culture through relevant elements such as names, signs, symbols, or designs to distinguish the cultural

characteristics of different cities. This helps form a unique cultural image and fosters cultural identity and recognition (Li, 2010). Today, many cities worldwide are enhancing their cultural brand construction through various methods and strategies. According to Zhang (2019), the regional culture, as a valuable intangible asset of a city, plays an irreplaceable role in shaping the character and enhancing the charm of a city. He believes that the infiltration of regional culture into the design of city exhibitions can not only greatly improve the influence of the exhibition, but also have an unexpected marketing and publicity effect, and play a very positive role in the dissemination and development of regional culture itself. Therefore, by analysing the influence of regional culture on city exhibitions, he elaborated on the necessity of integrating regional culture into city exhibitions and took the Hunan Glorious 60th Anniversary Achievement exhibition as an example to explore the infiltration and dissemination strategy of regional culture in city exhibitions.

Taking Xi'an Internet city as an example, Xu Jie (2023) explored the impact of TikTok, a short-video sharing application, on the construction and dissemination of China's urban tourism image based on semiotics theory and the '5W' communication theory. TikTok users deploy numerous audiovisual symbols to create related short videos of different genres, which contributes to shaping Xi'an as a wonderful tourist destination with gorgeous landscapes, deep historical and cultural accumulation, and high modernity; then the destination images of Xi'an are disseminated by the communicators (users with diverse identities) through three different channels to the audience, which obtains good effects.

Every city possibly has one main distinguishing character, whether it is heritage, art, or something else(Merrilees, Miller & Herington, 2009）. It can be said that harnessing cultural assets and values is an important factor in many cities' successful branding. The characteristics and functions of city culture have been valued by many scholars, who have

not only conducted a series of studies in theory but also studied many cities in practice. Through literature review, many experts and scholars have carried out research on the practice of city cultural brands in different cities from different levels, and the specific research conclusions can be shown in Table 2.13. These cities were chosen as examples because the cultural branding process of most of the cities in the case has been published in many academic journals. And they ensure a successful cultural transformation that researchers, city managers, and marketing experts can reference (Ozer, S. U.,2017). There are many cities that are enhancing their cultural brand through various methods and strategies.

Table 2.13： Case Study on City Cultural Branding Practice

scholar	**City (Place)**	**strategy**
Ozer, S. U. (2017). Ozer, S. U. (2017). The role of culture in city branding. *Strategic place branding methodologies and theory for tourist attraction*. Bayraktar, A., & Uslay, C. (Eds.), pp. 236-239. IGI Global.	Glasgow	Culture has been used as a major tool in Glasgow's transformation and branding, including partnerships between public and private institutions, city marketing strategies, reshaping Glasgow's image through cultural elements, investment in infrastructure, Glasgow's selection as European Capital of Culture in 1990, and the establishment of new cultural venues. The City Image Management agency has come up with the slogan "Better Glasgow" to support the city's change（Ilguner & Asplund, 2011）. Restoration of the Burrell Museum,（considered one of the most important art galleries of our time.）
	Dublin	Through cultural investments and projects, it has developed into a strong cultural brand on the national and international stage: the Irish

		Museum of Modern Art and the National Gallery. Organize international cultural events (such as the 1999 MTV Europe Music Awards). Organize training programs to maintain and develop existing cultural activities in the city and provide support to entrepreneurs in cultural organizations. Established the James Joyce Centre (named after the Irish writer James Joyce) and organised many events, including musical performances, literary days, parades, conferences and seminars. Souvenirs of the honoring writer are a big draw for tourists (Ilguner & Asplund, 2011). Launching flagship cultural events such as the Guinness Temple Bar Blues Festival and other forms of cultural events such as open-air film screenings, concerts and street theatre（Bayliss, 2004, p.507）. It has also been selected as a UNESCO Capital of Literature.
	Budapest	City planners applied several strategies to reshape Budapest's new image: rediscovering the National Opera House and restoring the continent's first metro. It has unique attractions.
	Bogota	The aim is to create a cultural capital. Identify music as a very important element in the city's image and promote a rich musical life（Kalandides，2011）. Design the city logo. Through interviews with stakeholders and identification of logos, city marketing is conducted in a more effective manner.

	Holstebro	Building a city brand through services and facilities to attract literate people ". Purchased the famous sculpture "Woman in a Car" by the famous sculptor Alberto Giacometti, which attracted the attention of the European intellectual community. Investment in culture, the establishment of a music school and the Odin Theatre (mobile theatre). The city's artistic image is renowned both nationally and internationally gradually. The main positioning here is cultural（Ilguner & Asplund, 2011）.
	Istanbul	Istanbul was selected as the "European Capital of Culture" in 2010. Istanbul was the capital of one of the world's greatest empires. Istanbul has been reshaped to meet the demands of global culture. New restaurants, shopping malls, five-star hotels, and renovated neighbourhoods are all effectively used to promote and brand the city（Yardimci，2001）.
Ardhanariswari, K. A., & Probosari, N. (2023). Ardhanariswari, K. A., & Probosari, N. (2023). Fostering Creativity: Unveiling Kanazawa's Brand as a Creative City.	Barcelona	Unique architectural landmarks such as Gaudí's Holy Family Cathedral and the Gaudí Park. With its cultural heritage and modernist influences, it has become a global creative capital.
	Melbourne	Become Australia's cultural capital through art and music. Alleys, galleries, and festivals decorated with street art contribute to a unique artistic identity.
	Portland	Eco-conscious and independent innovation, a hub for sustainable living, craft breweries, and artisanal food. An emphasis on local commerce, community engagement,

		and unique city planning underpins its unique identity.
	Seoul	It blends traditional heritage with cutting-edge technology to form an identity as a center of innovation and popular culture. Known for its K-pop phenomenon, modern architecture, and booming tech industry. Embracing both historical roots and a vision for the future.
	Cape Town	It combines a rich history, diverse culture, and stunning natural landscapes to showcase its identity. Promote local artists, vibrant markets and social initiatives.
	Kanazawa	(1) Utilization of cultural heritage (2) Show artistic value (3) Appreciate the beauty of nature (4) culture process (5) Promote festivals and events (6) Culinary excellence (7) Local community involvement (8) Fostering synergy between creative practitioners, businesses, and local constituencies (9) sustainable practice (10) Ensure brand consistency
Yoon, J. (2010). Yoon, J. (2010). *A conceptual model for city branding based on semiotics* (Doctoral dissertation, Brunel University School of Engineering and Design PhD Theses).	Bilbao	Through the Guggenheim Museum, its image as a city has been transformed into a representative cultural city.
Wu Wenmei. (2021) Wu Wenmei. (2021). Research on the branding of Cultural cities in Singapore. Comparative	Singapore	The state invests in the construction of several cultural and artistic venues in terms of hardware infrastructure, and sets up cultural heritage festivals in terms of cultural

Research on Cultural Innovation, (12),183-186		inheritance and promotion. The government creates gathering Spaces for citizens that contain cultural diversity and improve the overall user experience to promote community participation of citizens and stimulate the potential of culture and art. Gather memorial buildings, such as museums, libraries, archives, etc. into a mixed learning experience space; Bringing together commercial, artistic and technological buildings as one source of inspiration. Develop cultural tourism, highlight food culture, inherit and carry forward characteristic culture through national public holiday celebration activities, humanized supporting facilities and efficient and clean new image, good public security and citizen quality.
Joanna KARMOWSKA (2003) Karmowska, J. (2003). Cultural heritage as an element of marketing strategy in European historic cities. *Proceedings of the 5th European Commission*.	European historic cities	Cultural heritage plays an important role in the development of historic cities in Europe, and city marketing can attract tourists, attract investment, develop industry and entrepreneurship, attract new residents, impact on local communities - internal marketing.
F Bianchini et al (2019) Bianchini, F., Bissett, V., Cavalleri, F., Grabher, B., Morpeth, N. D., Oanca, A., & Tommarchi, E. (2019). Cultural Transformation: Main Evaluation Findings Hull UK City of Culture 2017. P21-32	Hull UK City of Culture	Overall goals：（1）Development of infrastructure and capacity in the arts, culture and heritage sector;（2）Providing high quality artistic activities (combined with diverse creative cases);（3）Establish domestic and international cooperation;（4）Providing for the development of Hull and East Riding culture to a local, national and international audience.

		Target supporter：（1）Raise Hull's arts, culture, and heritage profile through positive media coverage and marketing campaigns,（2）Increase the number of Hull residents，（3）Improve external attitude towards Hull.
Brokalaki, Z., & Comunian, R. (2019). Brokalaki, Z., & Comunian, R. (2019). Participatory Cultural Events and Place Attachment: A New Path towards Place Branding. *City Events, Place Branding and Promotion: Place Event Marketing; Cudny, W., Ed*.	Athens, Greece	Athens Fringe Festival（AFF）is a multi-faceted art festival. By exploring the relationship between participatory cultural events and place marketing, the larger impact of art audience engagement on the image and attractiveness of the places in which these events are embedded is discussed. Grassroots participatory cultural activities will become even more important in supporting and sustaining the authentic identity of places (Kagan et al. 2018).
Cudny, W., Comunian, R., & Wolaniuk, A. (2020). Cudny, W., Comunian, R., & Wolaniuk, A. (2020). Arts and creativity: A business and branding strategy for Lodz as a neoliberal city. *Cities*, *100*, 102659.	LODZ	Art and creativity are a proactive strategy to reshape the image of the city itself, but still building on its cultural heritage, using art and creativity as a strength that transcends the political and historical developments that influence the city. Can be invested in a new creative economy, creating new jobs and capital investment. Particular attention is paid to its artistic and creative strengths that have developed in the past, which also create opportunities for local attachment.

Cities in China		
Wu, Y., & Chang, Z. (2020). Wu, Y., & Chang, Z. (2020). City Branding Identity Strategy of Creating City Cultural Value-Take the Creation of Shanghai City Branding as An Example. *Cultural Communication and Socialization Journal (CCSJ)*, *1*(2), 34-36.	Shang Hai	Effective use of Shanghai's unique history, culture, regional and other core resources to establish a brand identity strategy different from similar cities at home and abroad. (1) Regional brand strategy, develop the value of regional venues, and give play to hardware advantages. (2) Brand communication strategy, hold a series of cultural activities, and create a platform for gathering wisdom. (3) Entertainment brand strategy, integrates regional resources through government policies to create exclusive brand communication routes. Image brand strategy, through the development of city language and visual image, establishes city brand, enhance regional identity.
Wang Yichuan. (2011). Wang Yichuan. (2011). Cultural symbols of Beijing and soft power construction of World cities. *Beijing Social Sciences, 2.*	Bei Jing	The soft power characteristics of Beijing city cultural symbols are the intersection of historical and contemporary, national and local, materiality and immateriality. In the process of developing into a world city, Beijing should not only strengthen the maintenance and dissemination of the existing city cultural symbols, but also consciously build some new city cultural symbols representing the characteristics of Beijing as a world city. (1) Use cultural media to strengthen the construction of city cultural symbols in Beijing. (2) support the construction of cultural symbols in Beijing at the level of cultural system. (3) Implement Beijing cultural value at the level of cultural value

		(4) System development and dissemination.
Sheng Luyao. (2021). Sheng Luyao. (2021). Research on "TikTok UGC Short Video" Helping City Cultural Brand communication strategy -- A case study of Shanghai M50 Creative Park. Guangdong Economy.	Shanghai M50 Creative Park	TikTok platform has turned ordinary users into sharers and disseminators of city culture and has gradually become an important platform for disseminating city culture by the entertainment of its content tone and the diversity of its expression forms, providing a good opportunity for the dissemination of city cultural brands. It emphasizes the importance of cultural production, entertainment, and the value of city characteristics, and discusses the necessary factors for successful city brand building. UGC (User Generated Content) Short video to help city culture dissemination application path are: The establishment of city cultural communication topics with city characteristics, the establishment of PGC ("Professional Generated Content" abbreviation) matrix to promote UGC to participate in the dissemination of city culture.
Lian Tonghui, & Gao Jianlin. (2022). Lian Tonghui, & Gao Jianlin. (2022). Research on Government Behaviour of Urban Cultural Brand Spread abroad: A Case study of Nanjing. *Journal of Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics (Social Sciences Edition)*.	Nan Jing	(1) Give full play to government leadership and do a good job in top-level design. (2) Improve policy support and provide a good environment. (3) Continue to promote innovation and enhance brand connotation. (4) Promote industrial integration and enhance the driving force for development. (5) Expand promotion channels and improve international visibility. (6) Innovative communication methods with the help of new media.
Wen Chunying (2014)	Qing Dao	It is necessary to combine Marine science and technology with Marine culture to create an "island of

Wen Chunying. (2014). City Brand and City Culture__ Dialogue among China's nine famous cities. Communication University of China Press		music", etc., The government should pay attention to leadership, planning, carrier promotion, coordination and effective publicity; Create a good living environment for cultural brands, incorporate the selection of cultural brands into the whole city brand creation system, and pay attention to the transformation of the entire industrial form; Highlight the local cultural characteristics of Qingdao, combine the cultural brand of Qingdao's mountain and sea tourism and the cultural brand of the characteristic street, and create the cultural characteristics of Qingdao.
	Xi'an	Summary of the cultural industry road -- to be the narrator of Chinese civilization; Developing and protecting cultural products; Rebuild the appearance of Xi 'an and promote the new appearance of Xi 'an; Pay attention to the details of the city; Put people first and support the development of literature and art.
	Nan Jing	Accelerate the development of cultural industry and enhance the soft power of the city: Activate the two advantages of science and technology and culture to promote development through reform; Cultivate and develop five key industries: creative design, animation games, film and television media, publishing and printing, advertising, and exhibition. Cultural industrial park: emphasis on quality over quantity;

		The government builds synergy to boost the cultural industry.
	Chong Qing	Build the western cultural industry highland, build the cultural influence of the city, and strive to be a strong city in the national cultural industry: Accelerate the integration of culture and science and technology, transform and upgrade traditional cultural industries, carry out projects to digitize culture, and vigorously develop cultural industries such as radio, film, television, publishing, distribution, printing and packaging, performing arts and entertainment, cultural exhibitions, and animation and games. According to local conditions, the overall layout framework of the cultural industry with "one core, one pole and three pieces" should be created; Strategic principles of cultural industry development: Give full play to regional advantages, rely on cultural resources, highlight city characteristics; Combining key breakthroughs with overall progress; Transform government functions and provide policy guidance and guarantee. Future development direction of cultural industry: Scale, intensification and specialization.
	Shen Zhen	Cultural Industry Practice - Creative Activities: From the construction of cultural infrastructure to cultural activities, especially cultural exhibitions with international influence and large-scale public cultural activities such as "Creative December" and "Shenzhen Reading Month", Shenzhen's cultural and creative

		industries have formed a good development ecology.
	Su Zhou	The path of cultural industry from manufacturing to creation: The transformation of Suzhou cultural industry -- the way of "cultural and tourism integration". Five stages of cultural enterprise development: The first stage is the product stage, The second stage is the platform stage, The third stage is ecology, The fourth stage is to do the standard, The fifth stage is doing knowledge. Policies to lead the upgrading of Suzhou's cultural industry: (leading role, protection of achievements, strengthening the grasp of practitioners and government managers on the laws of cultural industry and the mastery of knowledge in various specialized fields). Activate Suzhou creativity.
	Guang Zhou	Promote the leapfrog development of cultural industries and help build famous cultural cities in the world: Excavating core elements, searching for unique genes, protecting and developing cultural resources; Exchange and dissemination of cultural industries: Build a wide range of communication platforms to promote industrial development and establish a city brand; Strengthen the media industry, improve the modern communication system, and expand the platform for external communication;

		To make full use of the advantages of land sources and strengthen cooperation among Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Macao.
	Chang Chun	"The eldest son of the automobile industry", "the cradle of the film industry", "the granary of the North". The construction of the park has become the uplifting belt for the development of Changchun's cultural industry. Leading enterprises become the wind vane of Changchun's cultural industry development; Brand is the passport for Changchun cultural industry to go out; Talent is Changchun momentum in the development of cultural industry; Management system is the guarantee of Changchun cultural industry development.
	Liu Zhou	Sports creative industry boosts city brand: First, promote development by planning, and vigorously cultivate brand events; Second, with events and projects to attract high-quality projects to settle down; Third, with industrial events, to achieve sustainable development of the sports industry.
Jiang, Y., & Kuang, X. (2023) Jiang, Y., & Kuang, X. (2023). Image of a city in the local and global media: Suzhou as a case. *Cities*, *143*, 104593.	Su Zhou	Adopt a narrative style that creates visual symbols and use businesses, brands and events for venue branding. Engage target audience with a personal narrative. Consider the importance of both traditional and social media.

		The use of personal experiences or stories. Local governments can work with social media influencers to showcase more of the city's arts and culture.（Rich artistic and cultural history, including Kunqu opera and Suzhou embroidery）， Collaborations can be used to highlight Suzhou's artistic and cultural offerings, in keeping with the city's unique identity, and thus attract visitors.
Mu Zhang et al. (2022) Zhang, M., Wang, L., Zhou, J., & Law, R. (2022). City Culture and City Brand: A Study on Food Experience.	Guang Zhou	Food experience plays a partially mediating role in city cultural cognition and city brand identity. From the perspective of city culture, we should carry out city branding activities, revive history and culture to promote the sustainable development of city culture, actively build historical museums in cities, and maintain historical and cultural Spaces such as ancient streets and ancient buildings; Excavating and protecting local traditional living habits and festival customs; Actively carry out historical and cultural publicity and education, constantly deepen residents and other stakeholders' understanding of city culture, and enhance the city's brand image. Traditional specialty food businesses can create a greater sense of historical ambiance in their environment, for example by showing diners the history of their food through miniature museums and cultural walls. Make visitors feel connected to the food. Most importantly, restaurant managers need to realize their social responsibility that taking on the role of city brands in sustainable development.

		Residents and tourists must realize that they are an important force in the construction of city culture and city brand, and they should participate in it. Based on the positive correlation between city history and cultural cognition, food experience and city brand identity, people should also actively expand and deepen their understanding of city culture through various channels in daily life, and improve tourism experience and life quality while observing public order.
Cong Xiaoyu. (2019). Cong Xiaoyu. (2019). Regional positioning and image building of "City Cultural Brand" -- A case study of cultural brand planning in Gang Cheng District of Jina city, Shandong Province. Collection, 6.	Gang Cheng District, Jinan city, Shandong Province	The image building of "city culture brand" mainly includes two aspects: one is the mining of image connotation; the other is the reasonable choice of image carrier. In terms of connotation mining, contemporary city cultural brands must choose those cultural forms that can reflect the core values of socialism, to improve the popularity of cultural brands and spread positive social energy. As far as the image carrier is concerned, it is necessary to combine the connotation characteristics and choose the external image that conforms to the corresponding cultural connotation, including the LOGO and other indicative and guiding signs. City cultural brand building, we must carefully deal with the relationship between the regional positioning of cultural brand and image building, so that they support each other, play a mutually beneficial effect.
Yang Lulu. (2016). Yang Lulu. (2016). Research on the construction of Tang Cultural Landscape Project and City cultural Brand in Shaanxi (Master's thesis, Shaanxi	Xi'an	Shaanxi Tang cultural landscape project is very necessary and important in the process of city cultural brand building. It is the unity of sensibility and reason, the unity of material and spirit, and the unity of art and inheritance. Shaanxi

University of Science and Technology).		Tang Cultural landscape project starts from three aspects: brand design mode, humanized design mode and experiential design mode, so that people can perceive city cultural brand. Adhere to “loyalty” - loyal to the city, respect for the ruins, “new” - different from the conventional, the pursuit of innovation, “harmony” - ancient and modern blend, harmonious coexistence 、 ” Continuing” - protecting history, continuing culture, “feeling” - feeling in the scene, scene intersection five design principles. Through extraction, reconstruction, representation, and metaphorical expression methods, Xi’an’s unique brand image of city culture is created. The Datang Hibong Garden fully taps the historical and cultural resources of Xi ‘an, and uses ancient figures, cartoon art and other design elements to create hundreds of colorful artistic lanterns of different shapes, which complement the calm and wide water surface and Tang style garden landscape. The Lantern Festival riddles held on both sides of the stage of Hudian restore the cultural charm of the Tang Dynasty Lantern Festival. The strong cultural atmosphere of the Spring Festival is rendered, which not only brings a visual feast to the citizens and tourists, but also increases the interaction between the people and the traditional Chinese folk culture, which plays a positive suggestive role in the shaping of Xi ‘an’s city cultural brand, and at the same time promotes and promotes the city cultural brand.
Zhu Juncheng. (2006). Zhu Juncheng. (2006). Research on city culture and city image	Nan Chang	(1) Carry forward red culture, and extensively develop red culture (revolutionary culture)

shaping (Master's thesis, Jiangxi Normal University).		education and tourism (2) Adhere to people-oriented, take water as the source, shape Nanchang landscape culture (namely green culture) (3) vigorously promote history and culture (4) Develop religious culture (5) Develop architectural culture (6) Take the development of the city cultural industry as the carrier to promote the development and prosperity of the city's media culture (7) Vigorously promote and develop university culture (or campus culture) (8) Cultivate and carry forward the spirit of the city as a breakthrough, promote the construction of city civilization, and strive to improve the cultural taste of the city.
Liang Dan& Yin Zheng gang. (2015). Liang Dan& Yin Zheng gang. (2015). Research on City Cultural Brand Building in Zhengzhou under the Background of Inheritance and Innovation. JOURNAL OF ZHENGZHOU UNIVERSITY OF LIGHT INDUSTRY (Social Science).16(2). PP67-72	Zheng Zhou	Taking the construction of Huaxia Civilisation Inheritance and Innovation Demonstration Zone as an opportunity, through the deep historical and cultural connotation and excavation of city characteristics, systematic calibration and support policy measures, creative planning of cultural products and cultural activities, cultivating strong technical and innovative talents, cultivating big projects and brands in cultural tourism, entertainment, performing arts festival exhibition, film and animation, and celebrities' hometowns; in order to achieve the creation of Zhengzhou's city cultural brand and sustained healthy development of Zhengzhou city cultural brand.
Gang, Y. (2013, August). Gang, Y. (2013, August).	Wu Han	Horse racing sports can promote the inheritance, protection and excavation of the city's characteristic culture, promote the

Horse racing lead the construction of Wu Han city culture brand. In *2013 International Conference on Applied Social Science Research (ICASSR-2013)* (pp. 183-185). Atlantis Press.		construction of the city's image, expand and enhance the city's visibility, and lead the construction of Wuhan's city cultural brand.
Wang Guozhong. (2012). Wang Guozhong. (2012). Cultivating city cultural brands and promoting the construction of charming Wuxi. Jiangnan Forum, (9), 11-13.	Wu Xi	Relying on the platform of national historical and cultural city and the humanistic spirit of Wudi, build the brand of 'historical Wu culture'; relying on the birthplace of national industry and commerce and the inheritance of township enterprises, build the brand of 'economic and practical industrial and commercial culture'; relying on the beautiful natural resources and the characteristics of the Jiangnan water town, strive to create a 'colourful landscape culture' brand; relying on the reputation of the most virtuous and famous state and the Buddhist cultural resources, create a 'harmonious culture of the unity of mankind and the sky' brand; relying on the National Digital Film Industry Park and CCTV filming bases, create a 'scientific and technological fashion film and television culture' brand. Pay attention to media promotion; Focus on media promotion and industry support
Wu Qian-Feng, & Ding Lan-Hua. (2014). Research on countermeasures of Wuxi City cultural brand building. Cultural and educational materials, (27), 63-64.	Wu Xi	The construction of city cultural brand and its image should improve the tourism environment based on supporting tourism, and it should also start from college students. College students are the main force of city cultural construction, if more conducive to the establishment of university majors, then the future city cultural construction will be more specialized and standardized.

		The specific construction of city cultural brand should be: clear target, determine the center; Overall consideration, steady development; Deepen education and cultivate culture; Strengthen infrastructure construction, active exchanges; Breathe life, replace the blood.
Zhang Ping. (2007). A Study on the Practice and Characteristics of Shaping City Cultural Brand in Zhangjiagang (Master's thesis, Tongji University).	Zhangjiagang	(1) Keep pace with The Times to carry forward the spirit of Zhangjiagang, and constantly deepen the re-education of the Zhangjiagang spirit. (2) Continue to do a good job in Zhangjiagang Yangtze river culture and art display activities, and the activities to further improve the impact force and vitality. (3) accelerate the establishment of a public cultural service system and build many modern cultural facilities and places. (4) The implementation of cultural quality projects, training, and the introduction of high-quality cultural personnel. (5) Deepen the creation of a series of civilizations, and comprehensively improve the quality of civil civilization and the degree of city civilization.
Feng Yushuang. (2021). Discussion on Cultural brand building Strategies of Cultural and Creative Industry cities in the New Era -- A case study of Cangzhou. Enterprise reform and management.	Cang Zhou (in He Bei Province)	Seize the development strategy in the new period, based on the practice of Cang Zhou, mining, refining its cultural connotation and the characteristics of the city, accurate positioning, building "canal city of martial arts" culture brand, to brand as the breakthrough point, take full advantage of tarsus according to age and industry, Cang Zhou cultural soft power and the comprehensive competitiveness.
Lu Shumin. （2022）. City scenes horizon, "poetry" Ma 'Ansha city culture brand	Ma 'Anshan	From the perspective of scene theory, Ma 'Anshan should build an online cultural scene, connect multi-

propagation path to explore. Shiting（9）35-39		cultural communities, create a good city cultural atmosphere, change the mode of city cultural publicity from "top-down" to "bottom-up", and gradually create a three-dimensional vivid, charming and influential "poem city" image.
Shao Jianwei, & Hui Lujia. (2020). Shao Jianwei, & Hui Lujia. (2020). Museum Exhibitions Help City Cultural Brand Building -- From "Chinese Dragon Culture Special Exhibition". Chinese Museum.	Chang Zhou (in Jiang Su province)	Using the 'Chinese Dragon Culture Special Exhibition' as a medium, the exhibition contributes to the enhancement of the cultural brand of the dragon city of Changzhou through the diversified interpretation of the value of the exhibits, the continuous interpretation of the city's history, the multi-angle valuation of the city's connotation, and the consideration of the recognition of the cultural brand. The pursuit of 'people-centred' brand recognition in exhibitions is not only the responsibility of museums and academics, but also an endeavour to promote the public's efforts to promote the city's cultural branding.
Li Ming, & Xiao Wei. (2021). Research on brand building Strategies of Anhui Animation Culture. Journal of Fu Yang Normal University (Social Science Edition).	Anhui (Province)	Keeping up with the development trend of the integration of the Yangtze River Delta, this paper analyses and discusses the current situation of Anhui animation culture from the perspectives of animation culture product subject matter, animation culture product communication and animation culture product style, innovates the brand building strategy of Anhui animation culture, highlights regional cultural characteristics, strives to guide and innovate Anhui animation culture products, and further promotes the development of the integrated animation industry of the Yangtze River Delta.
Zhang Tian-Ying. (2012). Building Nanjing Buddhist Culture Brand and Promoting the	Nan Jing	Grasp the characteristics of Buddhist culture, integrate Buddhist cultural resources, develop Buddhist cultural

Development of Buddhist Culture Industry.		industry, spread Buddhist culture, and achieve a new pattern of cultural development of "resource development series, cultural management industrialization, and industry promotion brand", so that culture can generate impetus, radiate vitality, add charm, build the soft power of Nanjing city, and promote the rapid development of the city.
Luan Tian, Fu Yu. (2021). Create the spiritual core of city development -- Overview of strengthening city brand construction in Gong Zhu ling City. Jilin Daily, December 1, pp.1-2.	Gong Zhu ling City	Carrying out a variety of civilised practical activities. Gongzhuling City will build a 'civilised city' as an effective carrier to improve the quality of the city, 'moral' as the guide, to 'a city to enhance' as the main line, through the rich and colourful cultural promotional activities Through colourful cultural promotion activities, the city will continue to promote the shaping of the 'moral culture' city brand and create a good cultural atmosphere.
Wu Baohua. (2015). An analysis on the construction of Urumqi city cultural brand. Journal of Lanzhou Institute of Education, 31(3), 33-34.	Urumchi	（1） Vigorously promote the development of city cultural industries. （2） Festivals and cultural activities as a carrier, to create a cultural brand of festivals with local characteristics, rich in ethnic characteristics. （3） Speed up the integration of local culture and Central Asian culture. （4） Pay attention to the city spirit of condensation and city cultural elements show. （5） Let the government play a leading role.
Wang Kai. (2014). Luoyang city culture and city image dissemination research *[D]* (Master's thesis, Nanning: Guangxi University).	Luo Yang	(1) Identify the city positioning, and strive to build a world cultural tourism city. (2) Integrate high-quality resources and use large projects to shape big brands of cities. (3) Strengthen the cultural industry

		and enhance the soft power of Luoyang city image culture. (4) Carry forward the city spirit and enhance the vitality of Luoyang city development. (5) Advertising communication strategies. (6) Public relations communication strategy. (7) Film and television communication strategy. (8) Media communication strategy. (9) Exhibition communication strategy.
Core documents		
Li Shiyu, (2023). The Path and Strategy of Digital Media Empowering City Cultural Brand Construction -- A case study of the publicity effect of “A Better Life in Xinyang”. Journal of Xinyang Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), *43*(5), 113-119.	Xin Yang	Digital media technology has become an important technical support and communication carrier for building city cultural brands. Financial media organizations at all levels take advantage of this favourable development opportunity to demonstrate the new appearance, With the help of digital media platforms such as newspapers, radio stations, networks and terminals and the results of micro-construction, the cultural connotations and civic spirit of the city era are constructed based on local culture, to make it a dissemination position for mainstream public opinion and an important platform for displaying urban culture. As the basic position for building a county-level media center, we should give full play to our own advantages and regional characteristics, achieve "four degrees" (height, depth, temperature, speed) in publicity, create news products with good flow and reputation, constantly meet the people's growing needs for a better life, and create a high level of city culture Brand.

		This paper elaborates in detail on the innovative practices of Xinyang county-level media convergence centers in the promotion of urban cultural brands in the digital media era, providing a key perspective for understanding the new path of Xinyang's cultural brand communication.
WangShengbin &Zhang qin（2023） Wang Shengbin & Zhang Qin. (2023). Shaping the City Brand of "A Better Life in Xinyang": Faith Logic, Development Logic, and Industrial Logic. Journal of Xinyang Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), 43 (05), 52-58.	Xin Yang	From the perspectives of faith, development, and industrial logic, this paper analyzes the internal driving force and strategic direction of Xinyang's city brand building, which is an important document for studying the deep connotation of Xinyang's city brand.
Chen, M. X. (2024). Chen, M. X. (2024). Research on the construction and dissemination of cultural brands in small and medium-sized cities: A case study of Xinyang City. Journal of Xinyang Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), 44(5), 107-112.	Xin Yang	To better promote the construction and dissemination of urban cultural brands, small and medium-sized cities like Xinyang should also grasp "three shifts" in urban cultural brand building and dissemination: a shift towards video-based content dissemination, conducting narrative video-based communication; a shift towards diversified dissemination methods, carrying out interactive integrated communication; and a shift towards platform-based dissemination channels, creating localized communication circles to achieve a comprehensive upgrade of urban cultural brands from the inside out.

Source: Author Collected

2.9 Summary

For the study of city culture branding, although there have been many research results from different perspectives, the literature search revealed that there is relatively rich

research on city branding, but not much literature on the study of city culture branding. In the 20th century, the literature on city branding and related research began to increase, and some explorations and research have been carried out on city branding and other issues. Although researchers have explored the issue of city branding from different research backgrounds and research purposes, and all of them have rich theories, perspectives and methods, and have achieved certain research results, they are relatively lacking in systematisation, especially the concept of city culture branding has not yet been fully defined by relevant academics. The focus of the existing relevant research results is mainly reflected in the research on the content of the city's cultural brand from the perspective of the cultural industry, tourism industry and other industries, and there is insufficient understanding of the impact of other factors on the formation of the city's cultural brand. This hinders the development and utilisation of city cultural resources by urban stakeholders, thus restricting the research on the positioning and construction of city cultural brands. Therefore, the research in this field still stays at the level of propaganda of city cultural image and fails to form an overall strategy and a perfect system of city cultural branding. Most of the cities studied by researchers are famous cities or provincial capitals, and little attention has been paid to the cultural branding of some small and medium-sized cities. For example, Xinyang City in Henan Province, China, which has potential research value, as the only city in China that has been on the list of China's top ten livable cities for ten consecutive years, it also has the titles of International Garden City, China's Outstanding Tourist City, China's Mao Tip Capital, the hometown of generals, the cradle of the Red Army, and so on, but very few scholars have carried out a comprehensive and systematic research on the Xinyang city cultural brand, so it can be said that there are still a lot of research gaps in this research field，which need to be further explored and studied by scholars and city managers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study is a systematic project with strong theoretical and practical foundations, focusing on the creative strategies for enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China. Based on city brand marketing theory and integrated brand communication theory, this chapter elaborates on the research methods used to construct a framework for promoting Xinyang City's cultural branding strategy. To achieve the research objectives, this study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods, selecting the most appropriate approach at different research stages. Additionally, the rationale for choosing these methods and their specific implementation procedures will be explained. The methods are shown in Figure 3.1.

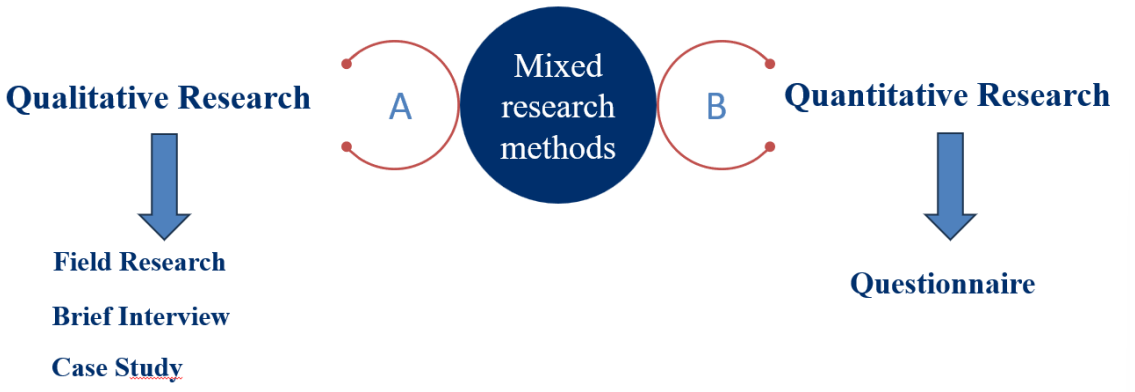


Figure 3.1： Research methods
(Source: Author designed)

Qualitative research involves conducting research by finding problems, understanding events and phenomena, and analysing people's behaviours and viewpoints. Its specific purpose is to delve into the specific characteristics or behaviours of the object and further explore the reasons for their occurrence. It usually uses historical materials, documents, interviews, observations, and other methods to obtain research and reference materials (Sharon, 2020).

Quantitative methods measure objective things based on numerical symbols and focus on investigating and studying the quantity of things using specialized mathematical and statistical tools. Quantitative methods are based on data, generally using statistical methods (sample survey, etc.) to collect data, and then sorting, classifying, and re-analysing the data, and finally verifying the conjecture (Creswell, 2014).

In this study, the qualitative method mainly refers to the method of field investigation. Through the researchers' years of life, experience, and observation in Xinyang City, combined with brief interviews with experts、scholars, and some ordinary citizen, to obtain first-hand information, qualitative research can help understand people's cognition, emotion and attitude toward Xinyang City cultural brand, as well as their views on related cultural activities and traditions. Qualitative research can collect opinions and perspectives through observation, interviews, focus group discussions, etc.

Quantitative research can help collect a large amount of data, and questionnaire surveys can be used to understand people's awareness of Xinyang City cultural brands, their participation, and their preferences for different cultural activities. Quantitative research can provide more specific digital data support to help quantitative analysis and evaluation of the effect of cultural brand promotion strategies.

This paper will make a systematic analysis and research on the practice of Xinyang City cultural brand in China based on the theories about city cultural brand as well as the experience of some cities in shaping cultural brand, and on this basis comprehensively apply qualitative and quantitative research methods to understand the current situation and potential opportunities of Xinyang city cultural brand. At the same time, it combines a variety of research methods, such as the literature research method, questionnaire survey, case study, and comparative method. This paper makes a deep exploration, analysis, and research on the shaping and dissemination of Xinyang City's cultural brand in China, to develop more effective creative strategies for promoting Xinyang City's cultural brand.

3.2 Purpose of Research

The purpose of this study is to establish a framework for promoting the creative strategy of Xinyang city's cultural brand in China, to enhance the influence, popularity, and attraction of Xinyang city's cultural brand, and to establish a positive brand image in the market. These research objectives will be achieved by:

The first objective is to identify the advantages and disadvantages of Xinyang City's cultural brand, determine its core competitiveness and unique charm, provide clear direction for brand positioning, and establish a basis for formulating innovation strategies. Through the analysis of the current situation of Xinyang City's cultural brand and the field investigation of the relevant factors of Xinyang City's cultural brand, the advantages and disadvantages of Xinyang City's cultural branding are clarified. Combined with the existing research literature on city cultural brand and the questionnaires filled out by Xinyang residents and original residents, the mutual verification of these aspects is made. The researcher analysed and sorted out the relevant contents of the Xinyang city cultural brand. The research flow of the first objective is as follows (Figure 3.2).



Figure 3.2： The research flow of the first objective

(Source: Author designed)

The second objective is to analyze the unique cultural resources of Xinyang City, analyze their characteristics and advantages, and explore how to effectively transform these resources into brand advantages to enhance the city's image and attractiveness. Based on the analysis of previous literature and field investigations, as well as the results of the questionnaire survey, combined with the SWOT analysis of Xinyang's urban cultural resources, the unique cultural resources of Xinyang were discovered, their characteristics and advantages were analyzed, and the transformation strategy from resources to brands was emphasized. The research flow of the first objective is as follows (Figure 3.3).

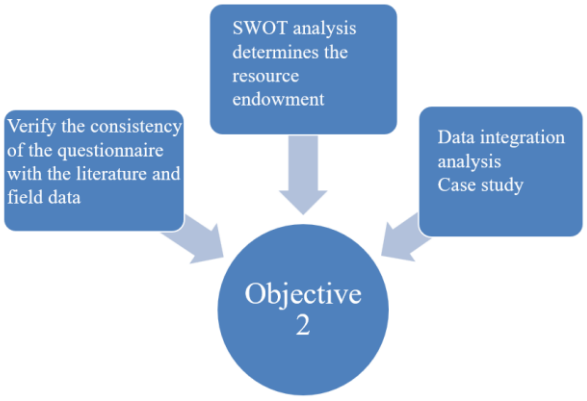


Figure 3.3： The research flow of the second objective

(Source: Author designed)

The third objective is to propose how to design and effectively implement creative strategies—including marketing activities, publicity, and promotion—to enhance the recognition and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand and establish a positive brand image in the market. Based on the SWOT analysis of Xinyang City's cultural brand construction and inspiration from other cities' cultural brand construction practices at home and abroad, this paper puts forward detailed creativity strategy suggestions according to the actual situation of Xinyang City's cultural brand construction. It puts forward some valuable suggestions for the sustainable development of Xinyang city culture. The research flow of the first objective is as follows (Figure 3.4).

This study collected and collated some previous literature related to these topics and goals, and compiled data on cases related to city culture branding carried out by some outstanding cities.

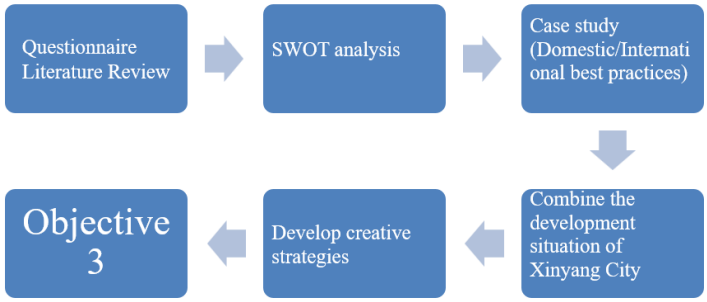


Figure 3.4： The research flow of the third objective

(Source: Author designed)

3.3 Research Questions

Based on the identified research objectives and findings from the literature review, three research questions were identified that would be considered:

i. What is the status of the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China?

ii. How to enhance the awareness and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand?

iii. What creativity strategies should be adopted to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of Xinyang City's cultural brand?

This chapter mainly introduces the research methods adopted for the research objectives and research questions, as well as the types and related strategies of this research.

3.4 Instruments of city branding

Ashworth (2009) proposed three main local planning tools for city branding, which are widely used around the world in various combinations, each of which can be described in detail and illustrated with examples, namely :(a)" Personality associations", (b). "Iconic architecture and designs", and(c). "Event hallmarking". Culture has a strong local

character; it is often used by local authorities to brand their place with tangible and manageable tools (Kavaratzis, 2011). In practice, The Personality association mainly refers to the identification of the city's unique personality. For example, due to the individual uniqueness of artists (architects, sculptors, painters, etc.), local brands also need to use personalities, so they are more suitable for this purpose, to create a connection between them and the place. Paul Cezanne's Aix-en-Provence and Raphael's Urbino are examples of this approach. Second, Iconic architecture and design can refer to major buildings and sites. The Colosseum in Rome, the Parthenon in Athens, the Pompidou Center in Paris, etc., these buildings are not only used for specific public functions, but above all, because they are a sign of the unique identity of the place and can build a reputation. Third, Event hallmarking refers to identifying a place with a specific event, for example, Historical and cultural events, such as festivals, are often chosen as part of a local branding campaign because of their visibility and acceptability, which can increase their global visibility and add value to a place. Events such as the European City of Culture, the Avignon Theatre Festival and the Edinburgh Festival are good examples of events that automatically and permanently label a place as ‘cultural’ (Scaramanga, 2012). These three instruments for city branding are often chosen by cities as the most important instruments with far-reaching implications.

3.5 Research Design

Through the collection, collation, and analysis of data, the research framework can include the following parts, as shown in Figure 3.5.

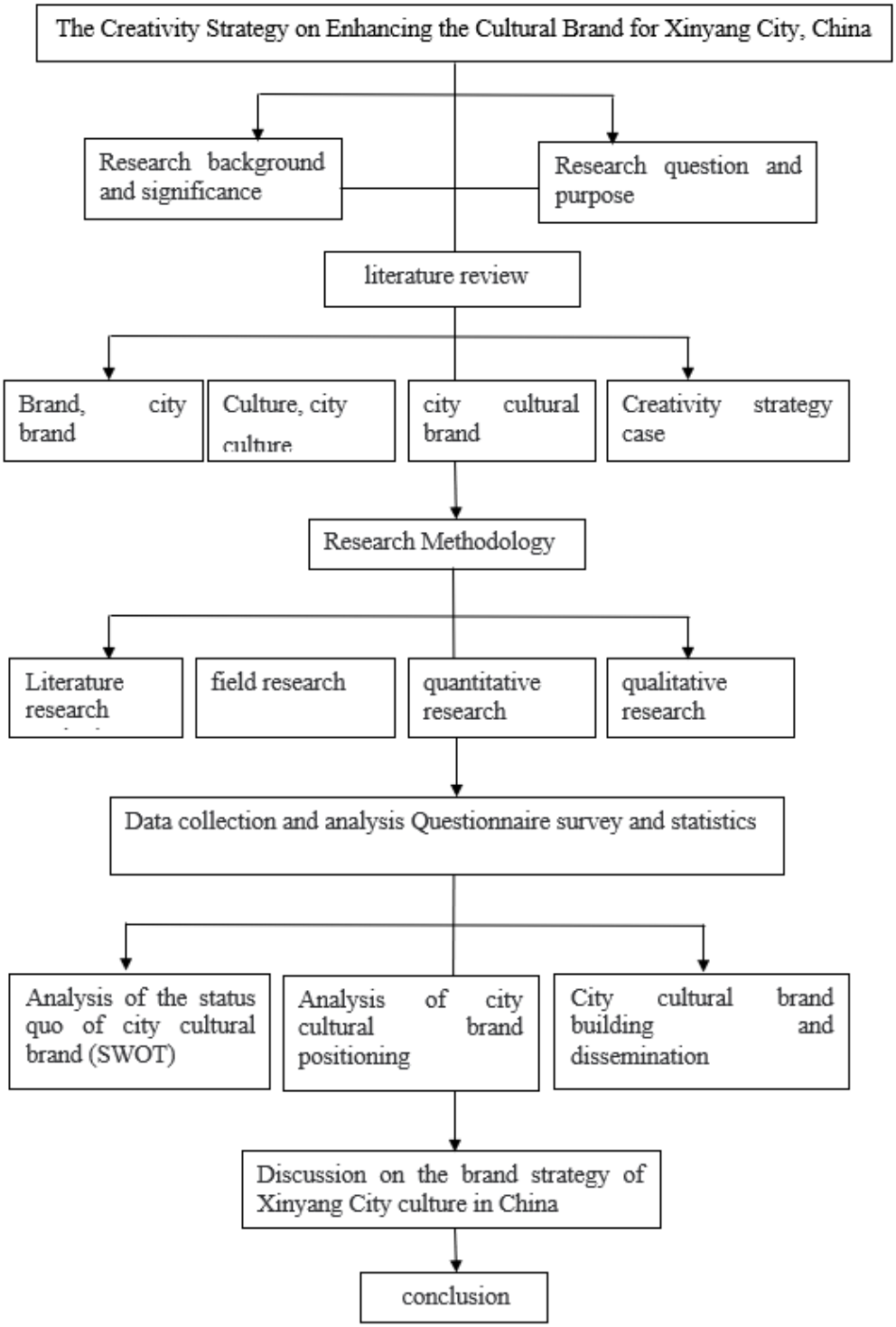


Figure 3.5： Research Framework

(Source: Author designed)

The research framework indicates that based on defining the research theme, clarifying the research scope, research background and significance, research questions, research objectives, etc., the study will explore the current situation, positioning and construction strategies of the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China, through literature analysis, field research and questionnaires, combined with SWOT analysis, and finally put forward creative branding and communication programmes to enhance its cultural influence and city image.

Through the above research framework, we will primarily adopt the following research progress and research flowchart (Figure 3.6) and research methods.



Figure 3.6: Research Flowchart

(Source: Author designed)

3.6 Research Approach

To achieve the research objectives, the following research methods will be used: To achieve objective 1, the literature research method, field investigation and questionnaire survey will be adopted.

To achieve Objective 2, literature research method, field investigation, case analysis, and questionnaire survey will be used.

To achieve Objective 3, the literature research method, case analysis method，method of comparative analysis, and questionnaire survey method will be used. Through literature research and case analysis, we can learn the paths and strategies of excellent city cultural branding at home and abroad. Combined with the questionnaire survey on cultural branding in Xinyang City, China, the collected data related to cultural branding in Xinyang City, China, can also reflect the city residents' perceptions and attitudes towards cultural branding in Xinyang City. Thus, it provides a reference value for the researcher to propose creative strategies to enhance the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China.

3.6.1 Literature Research Method

The literature research method refers to the study of the collected literature to determine the nature and status of the subjects of the study and to elicit their views from it. The documentary method is a kind of “historical” research. If it is before the researcher’s current research results, researchers can conduct research (Gu, 1998). The document method is a process of document collection. The basic steps of this process are: search, browse, filter, read, record, and identify (Zhang et al., 2021).

Literature analysis is one of the most important research methods used in this study. The literature research method is mainly to understand the research results related to this topic through literature retrieval and analysis. The researcher will make full use of multiple online literature databases such as Google Scholar, CNKI, Wan fang Database, Scopus database and some university libraries and other databases, many literatures related to the topic of this study are collected, and related concepts such as city brand theory and integrated brand communication theory are sorted out to lay a theoretical foundation for this research. According to the previous studies on city branding, city cultural brand construction strategies, and other related topics, a systematic combination and comparison can supplement our academic knowledge. With the support of existing literature, the researcher tries to put forward the problems and strategies of some cities at home and abroad in the construction of city brand and city culture brand, and extract the parts that are like the construction of Xinyang city culture brand in China. Based on the current situation of the development of Xinyang city culture brand in China, the researcher tries to apply the relevant conclusions to the framework of creative strategies guiding the construction of Xinyang city culture brand, to provide ideas and important reference value for the research of creative methods to enhance the city culture brand of Xinyang.

3.6.2 Fieldwork Method

The field method is a common working method in ethnology and anthropology, and has been widely used in the study of intangible cultural heritage. The field investigation method means that the researcher lives in the place where the research object is located for a long time, such as the group, nationality, or ethnic group inhabited place, participates in and observes the local life, studies its material culture and spiritual culture, and studies the culture of the society.

The field method is a comprehensive research method, mainly to obtain the researcher's perception of the research object. At the same time, it also includes photography, video, interview, recording, and other methods, and finally obtains the comprehensive data needed for research. To collect data, the researchers collected the relevant factors of Xinyang City's cultural brand construction from many aspects and multiple channels.

To achieve the purpose of this study, the researcher conducted a field visit to Xinyang City, Henan Province, China. To deeply understand Xinyang City's cultural resources and characteristics, and to immerse oneself in its cultural atmosphere, methods like field observation and interviews were used. The overall time frame is from October 2021 to May 2024. The researcher observes and feels the urban culture of Xinyang by visiting many famous scenic spots. Some pictures are shown as follows(Figure 3.7—3.16), and selects some experts and scholars to conduct simple interviews, the list of expert and scholars interviewed is as follow (Table3.1), which include both online and offline, the interview mainly aimed to gather everyone's opinions on the construction of Xinyang's urban cultural brand, to lay a solid foundation for the design of the questionnaires and the specific research in the later stage by collecting relevant information.



Figure 3.7： Jigong Mountain
(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.8： Nanwan Lake

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.9： Xinyang Baihua Garden

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.10： Hubei-Henan-Anhui Revolutionary History Museum

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.11： Wenxin Tea Village

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.12： Cultural Exchange Center

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.13： City library

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.14： Tea bridge

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.15： Urban IP landscape

(Source: Author's photograph)



Figure 3.16： Street slogan

(Source: Author's photograph)

Table 3.1： List of experts and scholars interviewed

NO.	Name	Position	Time
1	Ruirui Zhang	The dean of the School of Fine Arts and Design at Xinyang University	2023.12.18
2	Shoufu Gong	Dean of the Horticulture College of Xinyang Agricultural and Forestry University	2023.12.16
3	Qingfeng Wang	Xinyang Municipal Bureau of Culture, Tourism and Sports	2023.11.18
4	Wei Wang	The vice dean of the School of Fine Arts and Design at Xinyang University	2023.11.15
5	Dongfei Xu	The director of the Yangshan Cultural Tourism Bureau of Xinyang City	2023.12.16
5	Ying Guo	Senior Engineer of Xinyang Design Institute	2023.11.19
6	Bing Xiao	A section chief of the Science and Technology Bureau of Xinyang City	2023.11.18
7	Fuzhuang Zhang	Office Director of Xinyang University	2023.10.7
8	Liang Xu	A teacher at a university	2023.11.17
9	Jinyun Huang	Freelance designer in Xinyang	2023.11.14
10	Zhengyi Sheng	A retired primary school principal in Xinyang	2023.11.15
11	Junyuan Zhao	An associate professor at the University of Xinyang	2023.10.16
12	Wei Xiao	The community party secretary of Xinyang City	2023.10.9
13	Jinqiang Chen	The director of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Preservation Hall of Xinyang University	2023.11.12
14	Jiabing Su	Associate Professor at a university, Photographer	2023.11.19
15	Ping Dong	A doctor from a certain community in Xinyang	2023.10.10
16	Zhengguo Sheng	The Party Secretary of the Law and Politics College of Xinyang Normal University	2023.11.18
17	Xiao Zhang	Director of the Design Department of Xinyang University	2023.11.10
18	Dandan Wu	The property manager of a residential in Xinyang	2023.10.3
19	Xinbing Luo	A Doctor of Xinyang People's Hospital	2023.11.23
20	Li Wang	Postdoctoral researcher	2023.11.26

Source: Author's compilation

3.6.3 Case Analysis Method

Empirical and case analysis a mature research method in the field of sociology. A case study is simply defined as “the in-depth study of a single case” (Gerring, 2007， P20). Case study strategies have the important ability to provide an answer to the research question “Why?” and “How?”. Therefore, case study strategies tend to be used in explanatory and exploratory research (Lim, H., 2016). To achieve the research objectives of this study and given the strong theoretical and practical research on city cultural brand building and communication, this study will take the actual needs of improving city cultural brand innovation strategies as the starting point, and draw on the practice cases of city cultural brand building in other cities at home and abroad, focusing on the practice of China’s city cultural brand construction and the improvement of its connotation and overall competitiveness, this paper analyses the current situation of the cultural brand for Xinyang city, China, as well as the pros and cons factors, communication subjects, communication contents and communication channels in the process of shaping and communication of city cultural brands, and strives to combine theory and practice from the actual situation. To explore the creativity strategy of promoting the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China.

3.6.4 Method of Comparative Analysis

Based on analyzing the current situation of city cultural brand construction, shaping, and dissemination, this study provides insights into the current situation and shortcomings of Xinyang city's cultural brand construction, and summarizes the successful experiences and lessons learned through comprehensive comparative analyses of other cities in China and abroad in terms of creative strategies for city cultural brands. Thus, it provides experience and inspiration for the establishment of a creative strategy framework for Xinyang's cultural brand.

3.6.5 Questionnaire Survey

In recent years, questionnaire survey has been widely used in scientific research. The emergence and wide application of questionnaire survey provides a feasible way for education and social science research to move from micro to macro, from qualitative to quantitative, from speculative to empirical, and its research conclusions can provide a basis for solving problems, improving the current situation and planning for the future（Zheng Jingjing, 2014). A questionnaire survey is primarily a method in which the survey is first presented in the form of questions, and then all the questions are designed into a questionnaire. It is mainly used to collect quantitative data. It is a research method by distributing or mailing standardised questionnaires to the people concerned, then collecting and collating the questionnaires, carrying out statistical analyses, and obtaining the results of the study (Chai, L., 2020). A questionnaire survey is a commonly used data collection method, and it is of great significance for this study to build the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China, because a questionnaire survey can save both time and manpower, and can obtain a large amount of information needed for research in a short time. The specific steps of the questionnaire survey are as follows (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2： Steps of the Questionnaire Survey Method

Steps of the Questionnaire Survey Method	
NO.	**Procedure**
1	Identify research objectives and questions
2	Questionnaire design and verification
3	Identify respondents
4	Conduct a questionnaire survey
5	Recall questionnaire
6	Data result analysis

Source: Chai, (2020)

In the research and analysis of the creative strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang city, China, a questionnaire survey is used to quantitatively study the awareness of Xinyang citizens about Xinyang city cultural brand, the overview of Xinyang city cultural resources, the current situation of Xinyang city cultural brand construction and other related contents, and the data results are descriptively analysed. By analysing the current situation of Xinyang city's cultural brand construction, shaping, and dissemination, a research framework of creative strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang city of China is finally established.

3.7 Choice of Case Study

As the centre of people's lives, the construction and development of cities are rec eiving increasing attention. As the cultural value of cities is increasingly becoming a core e lement of city development, building city cultural brands is becoming increasingly importa nt. Many cities are establishing and building their city culture brands. Expedia, the world's largest online travel company, released a list of the world's top 10 cultural capitals in 2023 based on in-depth research and detailed investigation of its travel database（as shown in Fi gure 3.17 (Go City Global attraction Pass,2023).



Figure 3.17： Top 10 Cultural Capitals of the World in 2023
(Source: Go City Global Attraction Pass,2023)

According to the list of the world's top ten cultural capitals in 2023, China, as the world's largest country in terms of population and the third largest country in terms of area, has many cities with populations of more than one million people, but none of them can be ranked among the world's top ten cultural capitals list. The influence of China's city cultur e brand needs to be improved. Although there are more research results on China's city cult ure brand, most of them focus on famous first- and second-tier cities, such as the capital cit y of Beijing, provincial capitals, and municipalities, and there are few research results on th ird- and fourth-tier cities. Since this study adopts a case study research methodology, choos ing a city as a case study becomes the first and important factor in initiating the research pr ocess. The researcher decided to choose Xinyang City as the main data collection city.

There are numerous cities in China, each with unique characteristics. I have visited many cities in China, such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hangzhou,

Zhengzhou, Wuhan, Nanjing, Hefei, Suzhou, Changsha, etc. These cities are mostly large cities or provincial capitals in China, and they inherently have high popularity and economic development characteristics. I have also visited smaller cities like Luoyang, Lu'an, Changzhi, Yancheng, Zhangjiajie, Handan, Ningbo, Xinxiang, Anyang, Xinyang, etc. Among them, Xinyang left a deep impression on me. Its unique geographical location, abundant natural resources and cultural resources, as well as its livability, all make it a representative of many small and medium-sized cities in China that are facing the dilemma of "high cultural heritage but low brand recognition". Xinyang has been selected as one of the "Top Ten Most Livable Cities in China" for several consecutive years. However, its national brand recognition is far lower than its resource endowment. Researching the strategies for enhancing the urban cultural brand of such cities can reveal the universal strategies for the construction of cultural brands in small and medium-sized cities.

Xinyang City is in the southernmost part of Henan Province, China. It has a unique geographical position, bordering Anhui in the east and Hubei in the south. It is situated on the geographic demarcation line between the north and south of China, i.e., on the transition zone between the north and the south. At the press conference of the 17th Global City Competitiveness Ranking held in Hong Kong, China in 2018, Xinyang won the title of China's Top Ten Liveable cities in 2018, and it has been listed on the list of China's top ten liveable cities for ten consecutive years, which is not unique in Henan Province but also the only one in China. It has also been listed on the list of China's most beautiful cities in 2018（Phoenix Net Henan comprehensive,2018）. However, Xinyang City is not as well-known as it should be. On April 28, 2017, at the opening ceremony of the 25th Xinyang Tea Culture Festival, Xinyang City was awarded the honorary title of "Mao Jia city of China" by China Forestry Ecological Development Promotion Association (Figure 3.18).

In 2018, Xinyang was also selected as the eighth safest city in China, ranking ahead of Shenzhen, Jiaxing, and Dalian, becoming the only city in Henan Province to be selected. It is worth mentioning that Xinyang also ranked 10th in the country in 2016, which also means that the quality of Xinyang people is improving year by year, and social security is further improving every year.



Figure 3.18： Xinyang City was Awarded the Honorary Title of "Mao Jian City of China" (Source: https://m.xyxun.com/section-7-376297-0.html?btwaf=30729137)

In Xinyang, the beautiful scenery, pleasant climate, and the Chu culture and th e Central Plains culture fusion but also formed a unique cultural environment of Xinyan g. Since ancient times, it has been known as 'Jiangnan North Country, North Country Jia ngnan'. It is also the junction of the Yangtze River Basin and the Huai River Basin, and the junction of Hubei, Henan, and Anhui Provinces, and its special geographic location h as also earned Xinyang the reputation of Xinyang as a livable paradise. Xinyang covers an area of 18,900 square kilometres and has a population of 9.13 million (Xinyang City P eople's Government,2023).

The ecological environment of Xinyang is the best in Henan Province. Xinyang is a big agricultural city with few industries, so it maintains a very good natural ecology, with blue sky and white clouds every day, green mountains and good air, and much

vegetation. Forest coverage reached 36.21%, 15 percentage points higher than the provincial average. Among them, Huangbai Mountain scenic area forest coverage reached 90%, peak negative oxygen ions reached 478,000 / cubic centimetre, which is the World Health Organization's 'fresh air' standard 478 times, known as the 'forest oxygen bar'. Xinyang City has sufficient precipitation, good water quality without scale, and good air quality days; the annual average PM2.5 in the province is among the top. Xinyang City Shi He District has also been awarded the title of 'China's Natural Oxygen Bar' by the National Meteorological Bureau, with an excellent ecological environment (Xinyang City People's Government,2023).

Xinyang has one of the four major summer resorts in China, Ji Gong Mountain, a nd enjoys the reputation of 'the first lake in the Central Plains', Nan Wan Lake, which is 12 times larger than the West Lake in Hangzhou. Among them, the 'Cloud Garden' and the f amous Ji Gong Mountain Scenic Spot, in addition to the eight natural wonders of 'Buddha's light, sea of clouds, freezing fog, rain, incense, exotic flowers and grasses, strange peaks a nd rocks, waterfalls and springs', it also preserves a large number of villas of different natio nal styles from the late Qing Dynasty to the Ming Dynasty, and is known as the 'World Arc hitecture Expo'. It is known as 'World Architecture Expo Park' (Xinyang City People's G overnment,2022).

Xinyang, with good mountains and water, also offers the best tea in China. Xin yang has an average annual temperature of 15.1℃. The mountain area has abundant veget ation, abundant rainfall, and moist air, which provide unique natural conditions for the g rowth of tea trees. Therefore, the colour, aroma, taste, and shape of the Mao Jian here ha ve a unique personality. The pekoe is obvious, the aroma is elegant and fresh, the taste is fresh and mellow, and the tea soup is fresh and green, and shiny. It is one of the top ten

famous teas in China. In the Tang Dynasty, Xinyang Mao Jian became a famous “Huainan Tea area”. Xinyang Mao Jian tea won the gold medal at the Panama World Expo in 1915 a nd is known as the ‘King of Green Tea’. Xinyang has a long history of Buddhist culture. Th e Lingshan Temple, which was built in the fourth year of Yanxing of Emperor Xiaowen of the Northern Wei Dynasty (474), is in Tongxin Village, Luoshan County, and has a history of more than 1,500 years. During the Tang and Ming dynasties, Lingshan Temple was nam ed a national temple, and the emperors of the two dynasties came to Lingshan Temple man y times to pray for blessings, and Princess Jianning of the Tang Dynasty became a monk in Lingshan Temple, which is a great miracle in Chinese Buddhism (SOHU.COM,2019).

At the 21st International Garden City Global Final in 2023, Xinyang City, China, won the only double gold award - the overall gold award for the most populous city in category E and the single gold award for cultural and artistic heritage management (Jiangsu Provincial Government website,2023).

Therefore, based on its history, culture and ecological livability, as well as its inc reasing development and improvement in all aspects, the choice of Xinyang as a case study city is attractive and meaningful, and the promotion of Xinyang's cultural brand has consid erable potential. This new case study will provide new insights into how Chinese cities can enhance their city cultural impact. It is hoped that this study will contribute to future resear ch on city branding in other small and medium-sized cities at home and abroad, and provid e empirical challenges for the establishment of theory and practice.

3.8 Data Collection

3.8.1 Qualitative Data Collection Method

To achieve the research objectives, firstly, data related to the research objectives are collected through the literature review method. Through some academic platforms such

as Google Academic, CNKI, Wan fang Database, Scopus database, and some university library websites to search for some keywords, such as city brand, city culture brand, cultural creativity strategy, Xinyang city culture brand, etc., to collect research results on related topics. After data collection, researchers will sort out and analyse relevant data, and extract creativity strategies for cultural brand building that can be used for reference to pave the way for later research. The detailed process is shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3： Specific Process of Data Collection

Step	Detailed Process
1	**Identify the key keywords to search for:** City brand, city culture brand, cultural creativity strategy, Xinyang city culture brand
2	**Search through a variety of academic information retrieval platforms:** Google Academic, CNKI, Wan fang Database, Scopus database, and some university library websites, and so on
3	**Collect and organize relevant data:** Case strategy of city cultural brand research at home and abroad
4	**Data screening and analysis:** Xinyang city cultural resources and Xinyang city cultural brand related research, a comprehensive understanding of relevant strategies
5	**Conclusion**

Source: Author's compilation

Literature approach refers to the study of the collected literature to determine the nature and status of the subjects studied and to elicit their views from it. The documentary method is a kind of “historical” research. If it is before the researcher’s current research results, researchers can conduct research (Gu, 1998). The document method is a process of document collection. The basic steps of this process are: search, browse, filter, read, record, and identify (Zhang et al., 2021). The research collected some domestic and foreign literature on the construction of city brand and city cultural brand. Secondly, some relevant data were

collected through searching relevant websites, field investigations, simple interviews and other methods, as well as some relevant government report documents data obtained through secondary collection.

3.8.2 Quantitative Data Acquisition Method

Cities belong to everyone, and the interests of multiple stakeholders need to be considered. Therefore, to achieve the research goal, it is necessary to comprehensively consider the attitudes and views of stakeholders. At the same time, to deeply explore the cultural resources of Xinyang city and understand the status quo and future trend of Xinyang city's cultural brand construction, the researchers conducted a questionnaire design and survey to collect data. The specific procedure of questionnaire design is as follows:

i. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire design of this study is guided by the current literature review results and expert consultation opinions, and combined with the actual development of Xinyang City. The questionnaire star on the WeChat platform, which is commonly used for communication and chat, is used to design a common and convenient tool. The questionnaire content is divided into three parts. The first part is the demographic variables of the respondents, including gender, age, education level, and years of living in Xinyang City, China. The second part of the questionnaire is based on Xinyang city's history, cultural resources, related websites, relevant academic achievements, and field research, etc., to investigate the current residents' understanding of Xinyang city's cultural brand and cultural resources. The third part of the questionnaire is to measure the creativity strategy of promoting the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China, from the construction of public cultural facilities, the development of relevant cultural activities in the city, the image of the

government, the quality of citizens and other aspects of consideration, mainly based on the case analysis of cultural brand building strategies from some domestic and foreign cities and through comparison. Finally, according to the actual situation of Xinyang city itself to design the relevant survey questions. The second and third parts of the questionnaire were measured by Likert scale on a five-point scale, with 1 to 5 indicating “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “general”, “agree”, and “strongly agree” respectively. The five-point scale is designed to measure responses to items of varying intensity. To provide relevant guidance and suggestions for researchers to establish and improve the creativity strategy framework of Xinyang City cultural brand in the later stage. In particular, the Likert scale is widely used when designing questionnaires because it establishes a perfect measurement when measuring scores for specific items (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014).

In terms of culture and country, as the selected city case is Xinyang City, China, the questionnaire is designed in both Chinese and English versions, but the released version is the Chinese version, which is convenient for residents of Xinyang City, China, to understand and fill in. Different languages require different numbers of characters to express the same meaning, so the total number of characters and sounds required to express a word may be longer in English than in Chinese.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, this study studied a few relevant literatures and learned the mature scale of city cultural brand building and research design in some other cities at home and abroad. In combination with the research situation, some questions were appropriately revised after discussion with relevant scholars in this field.

To ensure the effectiveness of the questionnaire, after the questionnaire design was completed, some experts and scholars in related fields were consulted to guide and test

the effectiveness of the questionnaire design (Research evidence records shown in Figure 3.19—3.24). Based on the pre-test results, all the experts and scholars received satisfactory responses, only a few details of the simple adjustment, and finally determined the final version of the questionnaire design.



Figure 3.19： Consult with expert 1

(Source: Author's chat records)

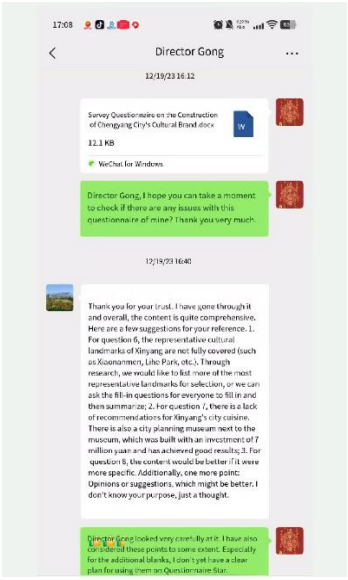


Figure 3.20： Consult with expert 2

(Source: Author's chat records)



Figure 3.21： Consult with expert 3

(Source: Author's chat records)



Figure 3.22： Consult with expert 4

(Source: Author's chat records)

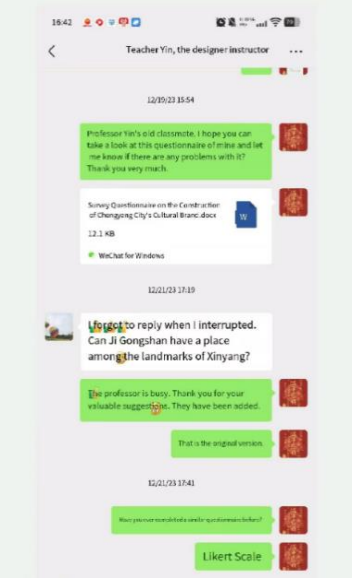


Figure 3.23： Consult with expert 5

(Source: Author's chat records)

ii. Questionnaire Distribution

At the stage of questionnaire distribution, we first conducted a small sample pre-survey from December 19 to December 20, 2023, the pre-survey questionnaire was distributed to approximately 20 respondents (some of them are in the list shown in Table3.3), all of whom were representatives from various industries, including Government officials, professors, teachers, doctors, designer, urban workers, and so on. After checking the survey results, we found no problems. We began to distribute the final Two-dimensional code of questionnaire design (as shown in Figure 3.25) to groups of people on WeChat, a platform frequently used by most people in China. Invite users to answer the questionnaire.



Figure 3.25: Two-Dimensional Code of Questionnaire Design
(Source: Author designed)

All respondents were asked for their consent by the authors and informed that the results of the questionnaire were only used for data analysis of the development of Xinyang's urban cultural branding and did not involve personal privacy. Sample selection was optimised under the premise of ensuring ethical compliance to obtain accurate and reliable data. City cultural brand involves a variety of stakeholders, to understand different people's views more widely on the research on the creativity strategy of promoting Xinyang

city cultural brand, and of course, by considering people's understanding of city cultural brand, the researcher conducted research on the questionnaire data and issued questionnaires to target groups. The goal is to allow interviewees to express their most authentic attitudes. Therefore, the questionnaire was distributed to government workers, teachers, designers, doctors, artists, salespeople, chefs， grass-roots workers, and college students (mainly senior students who are about to graduate and those who have already graduated) to ensure that they have lived in Xinyang City, China, for about 4 years. Thus, we can have a certain understanding of Xinyang city's cultural brand and Xinyang city's cultural resources, workers, businessmen, community residents, and freelancers. Most of these interviewees are native citizens who have lived in Xinyang all year round, or have worked and studied in Xinyang for many years, and make sure they have a good understanding of Xinyang city culture. Of course, in the later stage, it is spread to the wider population through the selected respondents. The education level of the respondents is also mostly bachelor's and postgraduate degrees. Finally, we collected a total of 481 questionnaires, excluding one invalid response, resulting in 480 usable questionnaires.

iii. Questionnaire Collection

Data collection is an important part of the research design process, and it is generally recommended that two different types of data should be considered in the research plan（Saunders et al.,2012). The first type of data is called raw data, which is used to gather new information. Secondary data is the second type, which is data that is collected for other purposes. Primary data are collected specifically for research purposes; these data are new and original. In contrast, secondary data are obtained from existing sources and used as research references, which may not necessarily align with the purpose of the research project (Lim, H., 2016).

This study will use both types of data collection. Relevant data, such as previous literature, information on government websites and other websites, government reports, news stories, and Internet commentary, are used as secondary data. Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect the original data.

The main data is collected through the distribution of questionnaires. After determining the final version of the questionnaire design on December 19, 2023, the researchers first collected part of the pre-survey questionnaire results on December 20, 2023, and from the results, we found that the questionnaire design was credible and effective through a rough analysis of some of the collected data. Then, we began to send questionnaires to several respondents from December 21, including twice forwarding the questionnaires. Until January 18, 2014, a total of 481 questionnaire results were received, and the number of questionnaires was quite sufficient. The questionnaire collection process lasted 30 days. The researcher can see the real-time data results of the questionnaires filled by the respondents at any time in the background of the Questionnaire Star tool on the WeChat platform, and finally remove one invalid questionnaire and receive a total of 480 valid questionnaires (Figure 3.26). The effective rate was 99.79%. The large screen of questionnaire data is shown in Figure 3.27.



Figure 3.26： Statistics of the survey results collected by Questionnaire Star (Source: Author designed)



Figure 3.27： The Large Screen of Questionnaire Data

(Source: Author collected)

3.9 Data Analysis

Through the collection of relevant data, this study mainly uses the methods of content analysis and topic analysis.

i. Content Analysis

Content analysis reviews the content of the communication in an objective, systematic, and quantitative manner (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991) and draws valid inferences from the text (Weber, 1990). As a city cultural brand is a complex system, we must first understand the concepts of brand, city brand, culture, city culture, city cultural brand, and other related concepts when we carry out the research on the creativity strategy of the city cultural brand in Xinyang, China. We also need to understand the relevant strategies of city brand construction in some cities at home and abroad and the status quo of city cultural resources in Xinyang, China, Therefore, in the content analysis of some materials collected through literature research and field investigation, we extend the understanding of brand concept to city brand, city image, city culture brand, city culture brand shaping and dissemination, city culture brand construction strategy and other aspects. The study also summarizes relevant data from local government documents and network resources collected by Xinyang City Cultural Brand, the object of this study, to provide a theoretical reference for later research.

As an important part of further research, content analysis plays a major role in developing the research background. which lays the foundation for the research on how to improve the creativity strategy of Xinyang City's cultural brand in China. The content analysis and links to research questions are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4： Content Analysis and Links to Research Questions

Research Question	Link to method
What is the status of Xinyang City's cultural brand?	Through literature、 field survey, and some network resources to understand the status quo of Xinyang city's cultural brand.
How to enhance the awareness and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand in China？	Through the study of some excellent city culture brand building practice cases at home and abroad, combined with some government policy documents, questionnaire surveys, and SWOT analysis of Xinyang city culture brand building, we construct the city culture brand image of Xinyang city in China and highlight the unique charm and characteristics of Xinyang city. Let people have a deep and positive impression of Xinyang.
What creative strategies should be adopted to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of Xinyang City cultural brand?	Through case analysis, questionnaire survey data and some pre-mastered materials, to establish a framework of creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang, China.

Source: Author collected

ii. Theme Analysis

Theme analysis is a widely used qualitative analysis method in data sets, used to identify, analyse, and report on patterns (theme) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It helps to describe the data set in rich and chunky detail. It also explains various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Through the theme analysis of the collected literature, it is mainly divided into city brand construction and city cultural brand construction. Through the analysis, it is found that the city's cultural brand is the core of the city's brand. Therefore, it is mainly necessary to highlight the city's cultural characteristics, and culture is the core of the city's cultural brand construction. When analysing the data results of the questionnaire, it mainly adopts the inductive analysis method and combines the actual situation of the city from three aspects: people's understanding of the construction of Xinyang city cultural brand in China,

the current situation of Xinyang city cultural resources and the strategy of promoting Xinyang city cultural brand. This study summarises and analyses people's attitudes and perceptions towards Xinyang city culture branding in the questionnaire survey results, with a view to providing us with experiences and insights that can be drawn upon to improve the innovation strategy of China's Xinyang city culture branding at a later stage. Detailed analysis steps are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5： Steps of Thematic Analysis

NO.	Step	Concrete Expression
1	**Familiar with data generation**	Read and reread the data and jot down initial ideas
2	**Data preparation**	Literature and questionnaires
3	**Data pre-processing**	Sift out the data related to the research object
4	**Read the literature and sort it by topic**	It is mainly divided into data related to the theme of city brand building and city cultural brand building
5	**Questionnaire data**	Use inductive analysis to generate clear definitions for each topic
6	**Show results and make reports**	

Source: Braun & Clarke (2006)

3.10 Summary

This study will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, including literature research, field investigation, questionnaire, case method, and inductive analysis. To achieve the three research objectives, the researcher will adopt different research methods in different research stages, which lays a solid foundation for the overall realization of this research.

The next chapter will make a specific analysis of the collected data, comprehensively and comprehensively discuss the construction of Xinyang City cultural brand in China from

multiple perspectives, and build a framework for improving the creativity strategy of Xinyang City cultural brand in China, put forward the suggestion of promoting the sustainable development of Xinyang city cultural brand in China. The researcher will answer research questions by consulting and analysing publicly available data on related topics, establishing relationships between data, and obtaining scientific results.

CHAPTER 4

DATA COLLECTION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the framework of creative strategies to enhance the city culture brand of Xinyang, China, through the collection and analysis of data. Firstly, this study explores the strategy of Xinyang city culture brand building through three aspects: previous research related to Xinyang city culture brand, Xinyang residents' awareness of Xinyang city culture brand building, and researcher's research on Xinyang city culture brand building; secondly, it builds a creative strategy framework for Xinyang city culture brand building based on the theory of city brand marketing and the theory of integrated brand communication; Finally, it puts forward effective suggestions for the sustainable development of Xinyang city culture brand.

As described in Chapter 3, appropriate methodologies were used to achieve these goals and answer the research questions. Each of these research objectives is described in detail below.

4.2 First Objective

This study attempts to explore the current situation of Xinyang City's cultural brand in China, to lay a foundation for the strategies and methods to promote Xinyang City's cultural brand in the future, and to enhance the public’s understanding and recognition of Xinyang City culture.

i. To identify the advantages and disadvantages of Xinyang City's cultural brand, determine its core competitiveness and unique charm, provide clear

direction for brand positioning, and establish a basis for formulating innovation strategies.

To achieve this objective, the research methods mentioned in Chapter 3 will be adopted in this study. Firstly, the researcher used the literature research method to obtain the predecessors' understanding of the relevant theories of city cultural brand and the views on the strategy of city cultural brand construction. Secondly, SWOT analysis is carried out on the development of Xinyang City's cultural brand in China, and then a questionnaire survey is adopted to obtain residents' understanding of Xinyang City's cultural brand. Finally, through the mutual confirmation of the opinions of these three aspects, the current situation and trend of the development of Xinyang city's cultural brand in China are finally preliminarily obtained.

4.2.1 Previous Research on City Culture Brand

To explore the current situation of the city's cultural brand in Xinyang, China, we need to understand the relevant achievements of previous research on city cultural brand theory, to provide some theoretical guidance for this study. Predecessors have obtained some research conclusions on the theory and practice of city cultural brand building through literature method and case analysis. By studying these conclusions, combined with field investigation and questionnaire survey, we can obtain some information on the development status of city cultural brand in Xinyang City, China, and use them as important data sources to achieve the first research objective in this stage.

It is understood that among the previous research results, the content of city brand and city culture brand is relatively rich, but the research results on the construction of city culture brand in Xinyang, China are very few. The main result is that city culture brand, as

an important aspect of city brand and city image, plays an immeasurable role in city construction and development. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct in-depth research and discussion on city cultural brands. The results of relevant research on city cultural brands in Xinyang, China, show that due to the low visibility of city cultural brands in Xinyang, the positioning of city cultural brands is not clear enough and the brand awareness is low. Further research is needed to enhance the influence, popularity and attraction of Xinyang City cultural brand in China. In view of this, it is of great significance and value for us to study the construction of Xinyang city cultural brand in China.

4.2.2 SWOT Analysis

To explore the status quo of city cultural brand and build city cultural brand, the first step is to carry out SWOT analysis to evaluate the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities and threats of the city. This helps to identify a city's unique selling points and competitive advantages.

Strength（S）：

When analyzing the resource elements of a city, it is necessary to explore its resource endowment from within the city itself, and at the same time, it is necessary to see whether this endowment can become a highlight of the city compared with other cities. About Xinyang City, China, first, its geographical location is very advantageous, located in China's geographic north-south division line, belonging to the central region of China, is the Yangtze River Basin and the Huaihe River Basin dividing line, but also Hubei, Henan, Anhui Province, the main road, but also an important transport hub (Figure 4.1). Xinyang is surrounded by Hubei and Anhui on three sides, and there are three provincial capitals, Zhengzhou, Wuhan, and Hefei, within 300 kilometres of Xinyang. There is the Beijing-Guangzhou, Beijing-Kowloon, Ningxi railway, and Beijing-Guangzhou high-speed

railway. Xinyang has 5 motorways and 6 national highways crisscrossing its territory, and is an important modern regional transport and logistics hub. Xinyang will become the only city in the province with a comprehensive three-dimensional transport hub of public railway, water, and air (Dahe Network ·,2022).

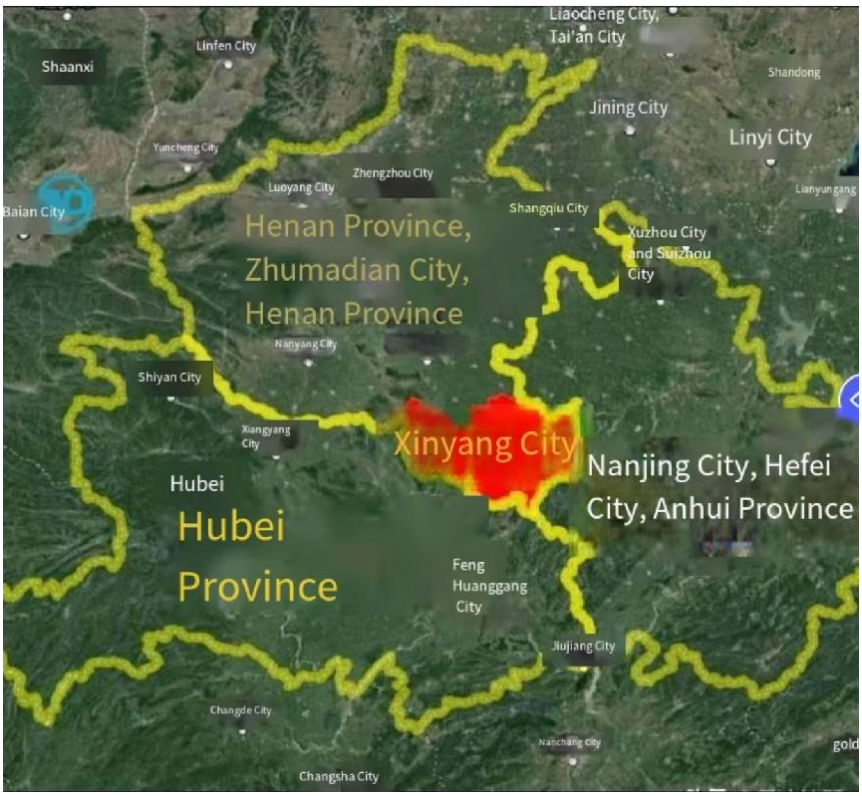


Figure 4.1： The location of Xinyang on the map of Henan Province (Source: 360 pictures)

Xinyang City is rich in natural resources and human resources. Xinyang also has a unique natural scenery, is a state-level ecological environment demonstration city, "mountains around the green city building jade, the city wrapped in blue water flying rainbow" is the true portrayal of Xinyang city. Yu Feng Chu Yun blend here, cultural landscape and natural scenery complement each other, famous mountains, famous rivers, famous temples, famous cities set off each other, known as "Jiangnan, North Country, North

Country, Jiangnan" reputation. The city's forest coverage rate is 29.4 per cent, 12.9 percentage points higher than the national average. In the south, there is Ji Gong Mountain, one of the four major summer resorts in China, which is the most famous scenic spot in Xinyang, where there are strange peaks and rocks, waterfalls and springs, there are Britain, the United States, France, Russia, Japan and other overseas Chinese in the early years of the construction of villas in different styles here more than 300. West of the Pearl of Yu South South Bay Lake, an area of 12 times the West Lake, is a national forest park, located in the centre of Shihe District, is the earliest large-scale water conservancy projects built in China. Upstream of the lake are Longtan Waterfall and Wuyun Mountain (five mountains with 'clouds', namely Cheyun Mountain, Jiyun Mountain, Yunwu Mountain, Lianyun Mountain and Tianyun Mountain, which are the main production areas of the famous tea Xinyang Mao Jian, and are therefore collectively referred to as 'Wuyun Mountain'). The treasure of tea, Xinyang Mao Jian, is produced here. In addition, there are beautiful monuments such as Lingshan Temple, Jingju Temple, Xianyin Temple, and many revolutionary historical sites. In addition, Xinyang is the 'land of fish and rice'. The proven reserves of perlite account for more than half of the country's total, ranking first in the country.

Xinyang has good mountains and good water, breeding China's best tea, Xinyang Mao Jian is known far and wide, many people know Xinyang are derived from 'Xinyang Mao Jian', Xinyang mountainous area with rich vegetation, abundant rainfall, air humidity, so here Mao Jian colour, fragrance, taste and shape have a unique personality, clear aroma, elegant aroma, taste fresh and mellow, tea soup Bright green, is one of China's top ten famous tea. Xinyang tea culture has a long history. Xinyang tea originated in the Eastern Zhou Dynasty, flourished in the Tang Dynasty. Xinyang is the hometown of tea. Xinyang people especially love tea, and a strong tea culture atmosphere is also very similar to the South. A

grand tea culture festival is held here every year, and 32 sessions have been held so far. Tea culture has long been integrated into the collective memory of Xinyang people.

Xinyang is a famous cultural city. A generation of Prime Minister Sun Shuao (now Huaibin County), making the land and water rich, he designed and presided over the construction of Yi Si bei (bei), which is the earliest large-scale water conservancy project in ancient China. Chen Yuanguang (Gushi), the "king of Kaizhang," and Wang Shenzhi (Gushi) of the Tang Dynasty spread the civilization of the Central Plains to Fujian, Taiwan, and other places. He Jingming (Shi He District), who advocated "writing will be Qin and Han, poetry will be prosperous Tang", was the leader of the "first seven sons" in the Ming Dynasty. There are many revolutionary sites, monuments, and cultural relics in Xinyang. At present, there are 6 national cultural relics protection units, more than 400 cultural relics protection units at the provincial level and below, and more than 400 important revolutionary memorial sites and revolutionary old sites, which are the first cities in Henan province. Xinyang is a revolutionary red city. Xinyang is a famous revolutionary base, the capital of the Hubei-Henan-Anhui Soviet area, and is the cradle of the Red Army, the hometown of the general. During the First Revolutionary Civil War, the older generation of proletarian revolutionaries created the Dabie Mountain Revolutionary base here, and cultivated many main units of the Red Army, such as the First Red Army, the Fourth Red Army, the twenty-fifth Red Army, and the twenty-eighth Red Army. In the Revolutionary War years, a total of more than 300,000 outstanding sons and daughters in Xinyang gave their precious lives for the revolution. Xu Shiyou, Li Desheng, Wan Haifeng, You Taizhong and more than 100 Xinyang generals from here to the whole country.

Xinyang is a historic city. As early as 8,000 years ago, there was a considerable scale of primitive agriculture on both sides of the Huai River, which is one of the birthplaces

of Chinese civilization. From east to west, there are many sites of Pei Ligang culture, Longshan culture and Qu Jialing culture. At the time of Shang and Zhou dynasties, the states of Shen, Xi, Xian, Huang, Jiang and Liao were established here. During the Spring and Autumn Period, it was called Shen Guo; In the flourishing Tang Dynasty, Xinyang was an important grain base. It was renamed Xinyang in the Northern Song Dynasty and is still in use today. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Xinyang's economic and cultural development had been quite large, with abundant grain and flourishing commerce, and it was a relatively rich and prosperous city in the Central Plains (Xinyang travel network, 2008). Xinyang Humanities Map is shown in Figure 4.2.



Figure 4.2: Xinyang Humanities Map

(Source: www.soho.com)

Weakness （W）

Xinyang City is an old revolutionary area in China with a relatively weak econ omic foundation. Although the national economic strength of Xinyang City has been gro wing, and the total and per capita levels of the economy have been increasing, Xinyang City lags far behind other cities in terms of the comparison of the strengths of cities in H enan Province and even many cities in the country. The industrial structure is not reason able enough, and the level of industrialisation is not high enough, and needs to be optimi sed. The proportion of employees is not reasonable enough, and the proportion of those engaged in secondary and tertiary industries is not high enough. There is still a shortage of high-level educational talents. The level of city infrastructure is not developed enoug h, especially the cultural venues are not rich enough, the overall function is relatively we ak, the city service function is not perfect, reflecting the service function of the tertiary i ndustry scale, proportion and service level is relatively low; lack of cultural atmosphere, lack of city cultural facilities, lack of strong cultural heritage, city architectural design a nd public facilities design cannot be very good to highlight the local cultural characterist ics of Xinyang, but also not reflecting the architectural style of 'Jiangnan in the North, Ji angnan in the North', city planning lags behind city construction, and the layout of some areas is unreasonable.

The level of city infrastructure is not developed enough, especially the cultural places are not rich enough, the overall function is relatively weak, the city service functi on is not perfect, and the scale, proportion and service level of the tertiary industry refle cting the service function are also relatively low, The lack of cultural atmosphere, the la ck of city cultural resources, the lack of strong cultural heritage, city architectural design and public facilities design cannot well highlight the local cultural characteristics of Xin

yang, That is, it does not reflect the architectural style of “Jiangnan North Country, North Country Jiangnan”, city planning lags behind city construction, and the layout of some areas is not reasonable.

Opportunity（O）

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Party pointed out that Chinese-style modernisation is a modernisation in which material civilisation and spiritual civilisation are in harmony. The city of Xinyang is closely focused on raising the flag, gathering people's hearts, educating people, promoting culture, and creating an image. With advanced socialist culture as its leader, Xinyang City actively responds to the people's aspirations for a better life, nourishes the hearts and minds of the people, unites their strengths with its cultural undertakings, and endeavours to promote the prosperity and development of culture. Xinyang City achieved excellent results in the annual assessment of the construction of the public cultural service system, ranking first in the province. Behind the gratifying changes is a strong support for the top-level design of the Xinyang Municipal Party Committee’s “1335” work layout. Focusing on the people’s yearning for a better life, Xinyang comprehensively promotes the city-rural integration of the public cultural service system, focuses on the exchange of tourism and cultural creation, and helps shape the city's brand of “Xinyang for a Better Life”. Xinyang City will invest 120 million yuan in 2022 to build 70 new city studies with distinctive characteristics and diversified formats, which are known by the masses as the “cultural gas station at the door”. Seven units, including Dabie Mountain Village meeting Room, Xin Xian reading Room, and Xijiu Central China Original Bamboo Village, were selected as the most beautiful public cultural Spaces in the country, and Xinyang became the provincial city with the largest number of awards in the province. According to statistics, Xinyang has built 42 museums (memorial hall), 12 public libraries

(6 first-level museums issued by the ministry), 11 cultural museums (10 first-level museums issued by the ministry), 2 art galleries, 207 township cultural stations, and 3328 comprehensive cultural service centers at the village level (community level), realizing full coverage of the public cultural service network at the city, county and village levels. “The new journey is a long and arduous one, and the new mission is inspiring”. Pei Jun, secretary of the Party group and director of Xinyang Cultural Radio, Television and Tourism Bureau, said that Xinyang will deeply study and implement the spirit of the Party’s 20 major, adhere to the cultural people, benefit the people with culture, develop with culture, and accelerate the high-quality development of public cultural services in Xinyang Old area, strive to enhance the people’s sense of cultural gain, and strive to write a new chapter of culture in “a better life to see Xinyang”.(Henan Daily, 2022).

The Sixth Plenary Session of the 17th CPC Central Committee has pointed out the direction and drawn a clear road map for the great development and prosperity of cultural undertakings and cultural industries. Xinyang City has many advantages and good opportunities to accelerate the development of the cultural industry. For example, Xinyang is one of the birthplaces of Chinese civilization with a long history and rich cultural resources. The cultural industry has a certain foundation, and the pace of cultural infrastructure construction has been accelerated, forming several landmark cultural facilities. The market for cultural consumption is gradually expanding, the economy continues to develop rapidly and healthily, and per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is rising year by year. Cultural construction has a solid economic foundation and broad space for development. The Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventeenth Central Committee of the CPC adopted the Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on a Number of Major Issues Concerning the Deepening of the Reform of the Cultural System and the Promotion of the

Great Development and Prosperity of Socialist Culture, and Henan Province issued the Outline of the Plan for the Construction of a Strong Cultural Province in Henan Province and a some opinions on Accelerating the Leap from a Province with Great Cultural Resources to a Strong Cultural Province. The State Council on the support of Henan Province to accelerate the construction of the Central Plains Economic Zone, proposed to increase the development of cultural industries, in the province's ten cultural reform pilot area, Xinyang has two, namely, Xin Xian Cultural Reform and Development Pilot Area and Ji Gong Mountain Cultural Tourism Comprehensive Development Pilot Area. In the face of many development opportunities, Xinyang City must give full play to the cultural resources in the economic development of the late-coming advantage, the cultural resources advantage into economic advantages and industrial advantages, enhance the city's cultural strength and competitiveness. Therefore, giving full play to the cultural characteristics of Xinyang City, accurately grasp the direction of industrial development, integration of cultural industry resources, through bigger and stronger cultural industries, to achieve cultural benefits, cultural pleasure, cultural prosperity, can greatly promote the development of economic and social undertakings in Xinyang City (Deng, 2013).

Xinyang City will comprehensively promote the strategy of cultural tourism, cultural and creative integration, and build a center of Chinese culture inheritance and innovation, and a world cultural tourism resort. Xinyang will strive to build a "1+5+N" cultural and tourism integration development system. Ren Jun, secretary of the Party Group and director of Xinyang Cultural and Tourism Bureau, proposed to deeply implement the '1335' work layout, focus on building a '1+5+N' cultural and tourism integration development system, and promote the high-quality development of Xinyang cultural and tourism industry" (Xinyang Daily, 2024).

Xinyang has beautiful mountains and rivers, humanities, red and green, and a uni que geographical location. Cultural tourism industry is rich in resources, full of advantages and good prospects for development. Xinyang is focusing on building an important nationa l health and tourism destination and the north foot of Dabie Mountain tourism demonstratio n zone, building a leading tourism and cultural integration development demonstration zon e in China, is moving toward the United States and good, the old area is red, ecological gre en, modern grey, beautiful scenery, food, hotel, beautiful things emerge in an unending wa y, interpreting the beautiful Xinyang with vivid colour and fragrance(Henan Daily, 2022).

Qu Shang ying, member of the Standing Committee of the Xinyang Municipal C ommittee, Minister of the Propaganda Department of the Municipal Committee, and politic al commissary of the Cultural and Creative Headquarters of the Municipal Transportation a nd Tourism, said that at present, Xinyang is deeply learning and promoting the implementa tion of the Party's 20 major spirits, with a diversified perspective and a broad vision, deepl y mining rich tourism resources, extensively consolidating the strong force of cultural touri sm development, constantly enriching cultural tourism formats and innovating cultural tour ism products. Continue to strengthen the core attraction of tourism destinations and the cor e competitiveness of the cultural tourism consumer market, and strive to write a brilliant ne w chapter of "a better life to see Xinyang" cultural and tourism.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has also compiled and issued the "14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development" (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan"), and will soon issue 10 special plans for artistic creation, cultural relic protection and scientific and technological innovation, intangible cultural heritage protection and inheritance, public cultural services, cultural industry development, and tourism development. The plan proposes that by 2025, major progress will be made in building China

into a socialist cultural power. It is mainly manifested in: Institutions and mechanisms for the high-quality development of cultural programs, cultural industries and tourism have been improved, governance effectiveness has been significantly improved, the cultural and cultural life of the people has become increasingly enriched, the influence of Chinese culture has been further enhanced, the cohesiveness of the Chinese nation has been further strengthened, and the role of culture in shaping the soul and empowering the Chinese people and tourism in serving the people and driving tourism has become more prominent. Cultural undertakings, cultural industries and tourism have become a strong driving force and important support for economic and social development and competition in overall national strength. It is reported that the key task of cultural and tourism development during the "14th Five-Year Plan" period is to comprehensively promote the "one project and seven systems", which are: We will carry out projects to promote social civilization, build a system for artistic creation in a new era, improve the system for the protection, inheritance and utilization of cultural heritage, improve the system of modern public cultural services, improve the system of modern cultural industries, improve the system of modern tourism, improve the system of modern culture and tourism market, and develop a system for cultural exchanges and tourism promotion with other countries and with Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan(Zheng N, Zhao S.,2021).

Xinyang City in Henan Province, China, has been selected as China's top ten livable cities list for ten consecutive years, is a model city for the common development of national eco-tourism and red tourism, is one of the 12 high-quality red tourism areas cultivated by the state, and is one of the 10 key tourism cities planned and developed by the province. It has won the honorary titles of National Civilized City, National Health City,

National Garden City, National Forest City, China Excellent Tourism City, National Green Model City, National Ecological Demonstration City, National Top 30 Leisure City, China's most green competitive city, etc., and the International Garden City. The CPC Central Committee, the State Council, and the Henan Provincial Party Committee and provincial government attach great importance to and strongly support the development of Xinyang City, China. Xinyang is facing a great opportunity to develop its culture. Xinyang City's cultural brand promotion potential is considerable.

Threat (T)

At present, the whole country is vigorously promoting the city, exploring the city's resources, and building the city's brand. As a medium-sized city that is not a provincial capital, Xinyang City has no absolute advantages in economy, science and technology, and relatively weak economic strength. Its industrial development is not rapid enough, its industrial structure is not reasonable, and although its city cultural resources are rich, they have not been deeply explored and fully utilized. All these have produced huge obstacles to the construction and development of Xinyang's city cultural brand. Secondly, Xinyang is Dabie Mountain area, an old revolutionary area, influenced by traditional history, and the idea is relatively backward. Experts have pointed out that ideas and cultural atmosphere have a lasting and profound impact on the economy and city construction. Moreover, the neighboring cities of Xinyang, as competitors, pose a serious threat to Xinyang in terms of attracting talents, resources, and tourists, because the city's resource elements in the surrounding areas are rich and diverse, with very similar natural resources and cultural resources, and similar tourist source markets. Finally, as a more prominent advantage of tea resources in Xinyang is also less than the more famous

Hangzhou West Lake Longjing and Suzhou Bi Luo Chun, Xinyang has one of the four major summer resorts in the country, Ji Gong Mountain, although it is one of the first eight national scenic spots opened to the outside world in New China, the first batch of 4A national key scenic spots, but its popularity is not as good as the other three (Bei Dai He in Qinhuangdao City, Hebei province; Moganshan Mountain in Huzhou City, Zhejiang Province; Lushan Mountain in Jiu Jiang City, Jiangxi Province).The Nan Wan Lake, the pearl of southern Henan Province, owned by Xinyang City, is 12 times larger than the West Lake of Hangzhou, but its popularity is far less than the West Lake of Hangzhou. In this way, the development of Xinyang city's cultural brand is facing a great threat.

4.2.3 Awareness of Xinyang City Residents to Xinyang City Cultural Brand

Through the questionnaire survey method, the results of Xinyang residents' understanding of Xinyang city's cultural brand are as follows. All the analysis results are based on the survey data results exported from Questionnaire Star. The first part consists of the basic information of the questionnaire respondents, including gender, age, educational level, and the duration of residence in Xinyang. The second part is about people's understanding of Xinyang's urban cultural brand was conducted using the Likert scale. The statistical results were processed using Microsoft Excel (2003–2007 Edition) to round off the raw questionnaire data. Finally, it is presented through figures. The subsequent analysis process mainly involves conducting data analysis on the questionnaire results based on the questionnaire content and the three research objectives.

First, Survey results show the approximate distribution of respondents in the original data images (Figure 4.3). Although a small number of respondents currently reside outside Xinyang city, all have lived in the city for at least several years, with some exceeding ten years.

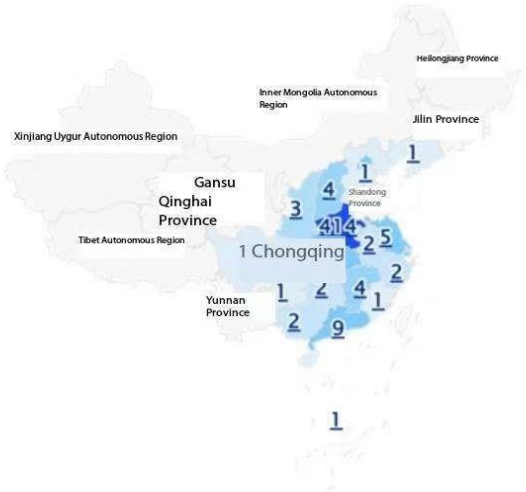


Figure 4.3： The Location Distribution of the Respondents
(Source: Author collected)

The gender ratio of respondents is 41.25% male and 58.75% female, which is reasonable (as shown in Figure 4.4). Because the overall proportion of women in Xinyang City is slightly higher than that of men, the proportion of respondents is normal.

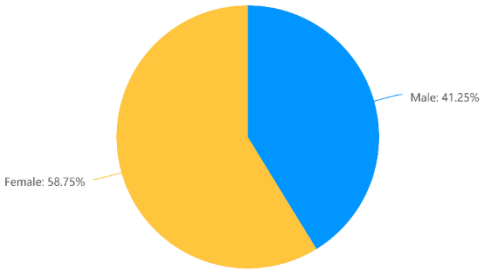


Figure 4.4： Gender ratio of respondents
(Source: Author collected)

The age structure in the questionnaire survey data is shown in Figure 4.5. The proportion of people aged between 26 and 45 in the surveyed population is relatively high, which is because it takes a certain amount of time and experience to understand a city, and people in these age groups really feel the rapid development of the city in recent years. Therefore, it is reasonable for most people in the survey to focus on the young and middle-aged age groups. Of course, some interviewees are college students aged 18-25 years old and seniors over 46 years old. They are also important stakeholders of the city, and they also gave valuable opinions on the understanding of Xinyang city's cultural brand.

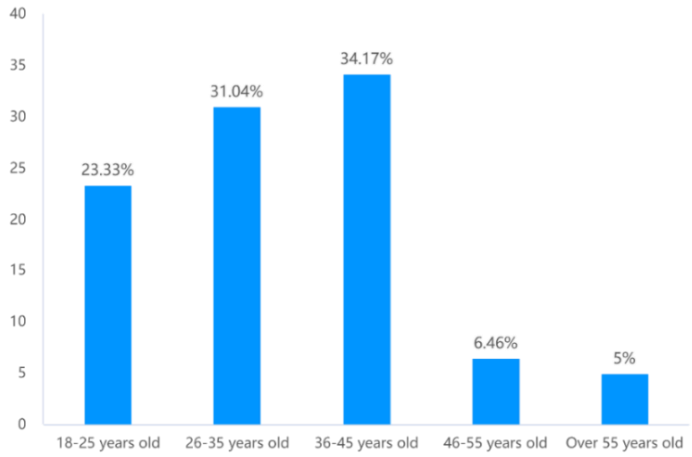


Figure 4.5： Age Composition of Respondents

(Source: Author collected)

The education level structure of the respondents in the questionnaire data is as seen in Figure 4.6. Among the respondents, Bachelor's/College level is the highest, accounting for 58.54%, followed by postgraduate level, accounting for 27.08%. Of course, some of them were local elders, although the level of education of some of them was not very high. But they had lived in their city for many years and were very familiar with the development of their city. Although the level of education cannot explain everything, people with a high level of education also have a deeper and more comprehensive

understanding of city culture. Therefore, the education level structure of the questionnaire respondents is also reasonable.

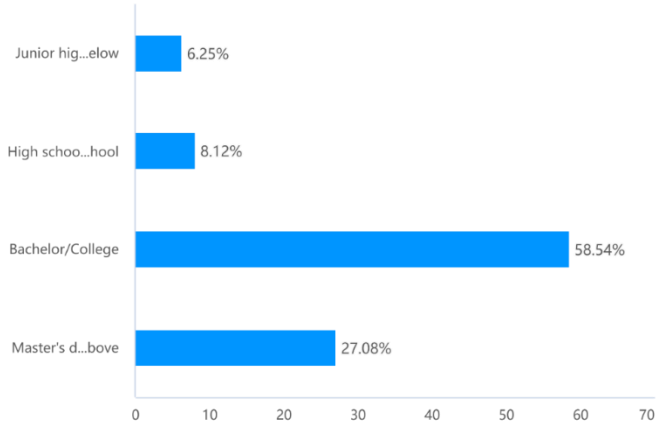


Figure 4.6： Educational Level Structure Chart of Respondents

(Source: Author collected)

The length of time the respondents lived in Xinyang City is shown in Figure 4.7.

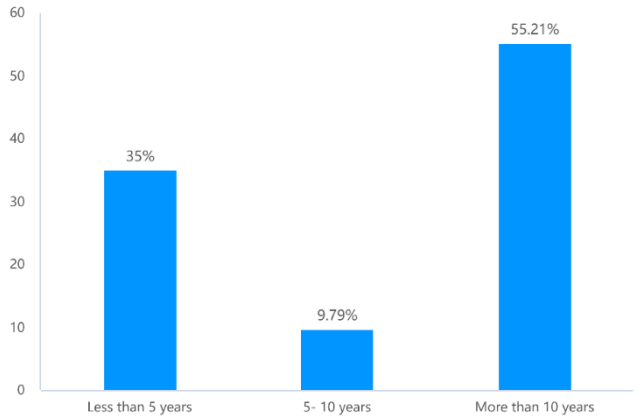


Figure 4.7： Length of Time Respondents Lived in Xinyang

(Source: Author collected)

From the result, we can see that 55.21% of the respondents have lived in Xinyang for more than 10 years, accounting for more than half of the total 480 interviewees. Most of them are Xinyang locals, including some residents who have studied and worked in

Xinyang for more than 10 years. Their development cannot be separated from the development of Xinyang city, and they have a deeper understanding of Xinyang's cultural resources. Some of the interviewees are senior college students studying in Xinyang. They have lived in Xinyang for less than 5 years, basically 3-4 years, and they also have a true feeling of Xinyang city culture. There is also a small number of respondents who have lived in Xinyang City for 5-10 years, and some of them have stayed in Xinyang directly to work after studying in Xinyang City. They recognize Xinyang city very much and like Xinyang city's culture. Their opinions can also represent the public's attitude towards the development of Xinyang City's cultural brand.

When it comes to people's understanding of the cultural brand of Xinyang city, the researchers obtained the following results through the questionnaire survey (Figure 4.8). Most people are very concerned about the construction and development of Xinyang City cultural brand, and the overall score is the highest among the four questions. However, people's answers about their familiarity with the cultural brand of Xinyang City and the exact positioning of Xinyang City cultural brand are not very confident. Xinyang City cultural brand is not prominent and loud enough, and its positioning is not particularly clear. Finally, most people are not very confident about the high visibility of Xinyang city cultural brand at home and abroad. Indeed, the visibility of Xinyang city cultural brand in the province is not too high, let alone the visibility at home and abroad. Therefore, we must do this research to improve the image of Xinyang's city cultural brand.

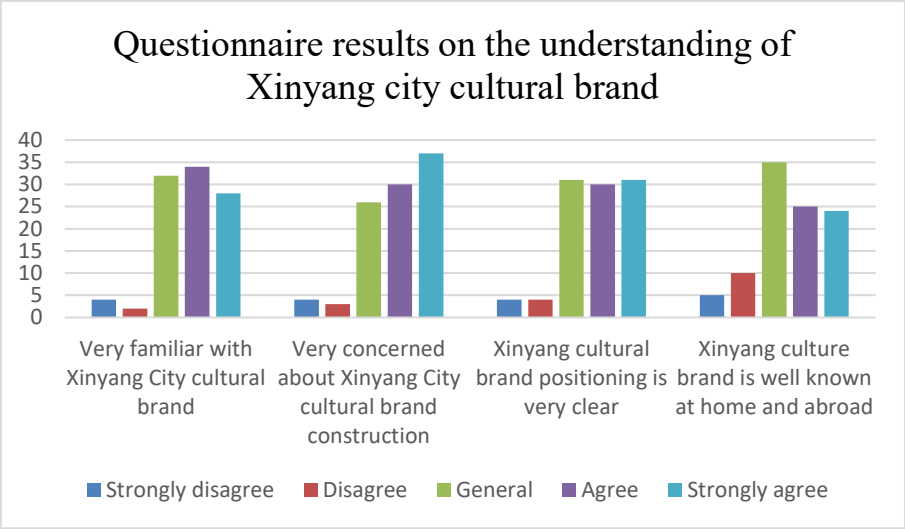


Figure 4.8： Questionnaire Results on the Understanding of Xinyang City Cultural Brand (Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.1.

The average score of the matrix questions：**3.76**

Table 4.1： Data Ratios and Scores for the Specific Questions that Understanding of Xinyang City Cultural Brand

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Very familiar with Xinyang City cultural brand	4%	2%	32%	34%	28%	3.8
Very concerned about Xinyang City cultural brand construction	4%	3%	26%	30%	37%	3.93
Xinyang culture brand positioning is very clear	4%	4%	31%	30%	31%	3.8
Xinyang cultural brand is well known at home and abroad	5%	10%	35%	25%	24%	3.53
subtotal	4%	5%	31%	30%	30%	3.76

Source: author collected

4.2.4 Summary

Combining the data from other researchers' previous studies, the data from this researcher's field survey and SWOT analysis, as well as the questionnaire survey's comprehensive understanding of the current situation of Xinyang cultural brand development by the residents of Xinyang City, it is concluded that Xinyang cultural brand is not well known both at home and abroad, that its positioning is not clear enough, and that people are not particularly familiar with it. Therefore, it is necessary to vigorously explore the cultural resources of Xinyang City in China, highlight its characteristics, identify its positioning, and innovate communication strategies. It is believed that with the advantages and potential of Xinyang City and the opportunities it faces, Xinyang's cultural brand will surely achieve relatively high influence, popularity, and attraction soon.

4.3 Second Objective

The second objective of the study is to analyze the unique cultural resources of Xinyang City, analyze their characteristics and advantages, and explore how to effectively transform these resources into brand advantages to enhance the city's image and attractiveness.

To achieve this goal, the research methods mentioned in Chapter 3 will be adopted in this study. First, the literature research method is used to obtain the previous mining and integration of Xinyang city cultural resources; Second, the researcher obtained an understanding of Xinyang city cultural resources by field investigation. Then, the questionnaire survey was used to obtain Xinyang residents’ attitudes and understanding of local cultural resources. Finally, through the mutual confirmation of these three data sources, the characteristics and advantages of Xinyang cultural resources are analysed, and how to

effectively transform these resources into brand advantages to enhance the image and attractiveness of the city is discussed.

4.3.1 Prospective Study on the Excavation and Integration of Cultural Resources in Xinyang City

The excavating and integration data of Xinyang city cultural resources obtained by previous researchers through the literature method will be an important data source to achieve the second research objective of this stage. Huang Yi (2010) mentioned that through the excavation of Xinyang city cultural heritage, the principles and process of city cultural heritage excavating are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2： Principles and Process of City Cultural Heritage Excavation

The principles of the excavation of city cultural deposits	The process of excavating the city's cultural heritage
Characteristic principle	Analysis of the city environment
Combinatorial principle	Tidy up city culture
Benefit principle	Identify the city's theme culture
principle of sustainable development	present a strategy

Source: Huang Yi (2010)

Through the literature research method, it is found that there are historical culture, cultural inheritance, and tourism culture in the sorting of Xinyang city culture. Among them, the historical culture includes geographical location, place name culture, historical celebrities, and the cradle of revolution. Cultural inheritance includes folk culture, Xinyang Mao Jian, and cultural heritage. Tourism culture includes tourist attractions, tea tourism, and tourism services (Huang， 2010). In addition, there are root culture (Fu, 2011), food culture (Guo, 2014), dialect culture (Wu & Xiao, 2023), and so on. The details of Xinyang city cultural resources classification are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3： Xinyang City Cultural Resources Classification

Historic culture	Geographical location, place name culture, historical celebrities, and the cradle of revolution.
Cultural Inheritance	Folk culture, Xinyang Mao Jian, and cultural heritage.
Tourist Culture	Tourist attractions, tea tourism, and tourism services.
Language Culture	Dialect Culture
Cooking Culture	Food culture
Root Culture	Root culture
Religious Culture	Buddhist culture

Source: Author collected

4.3.2 The Finding of This Researcher

In the research process, the researcher adopts the method of field investigation to go deep into Xinyang City, China, and combines relevant network resources to investigate the local historical and cultural resources, natural environment, infrastructure, economic conditions, city construction, cultural activities, foreign exchanges, Xinyang people's lifestyle, spiritual outlook, and many other aspects. In particular, the role of cultural elements in city construction is reflected in many aspects. Specific investigation methods include observation, simple interviews, and questionnaires. Through investigation, it is found that Xinyang City has very rich cultural resources, mainly including these aspects: tea culture, landscape culture, red culture, root culture, food culture, and dialect culture. Therefore, these aspects are mainly listed in the questionnaire to solicit Xinyang people's understanding of their attitude towards Xinyang culture.

4.3.3 Xinyang Residents' Attitude and Understanding of Local Culture

Through the questionnaire survey results and data, it is found that Xinyang people's understanding of Xinyang culture is generally very unified, and most people agree with and

are familiar with Xinyang's tea culture resources. Of course, Xinyang's landscape culture and red culture are also relatively famous, but the most representative is Xinyang's tea culture resources. The result of the question that can best represent Xinyang's characteristic culture is shown in Figure 4.9.

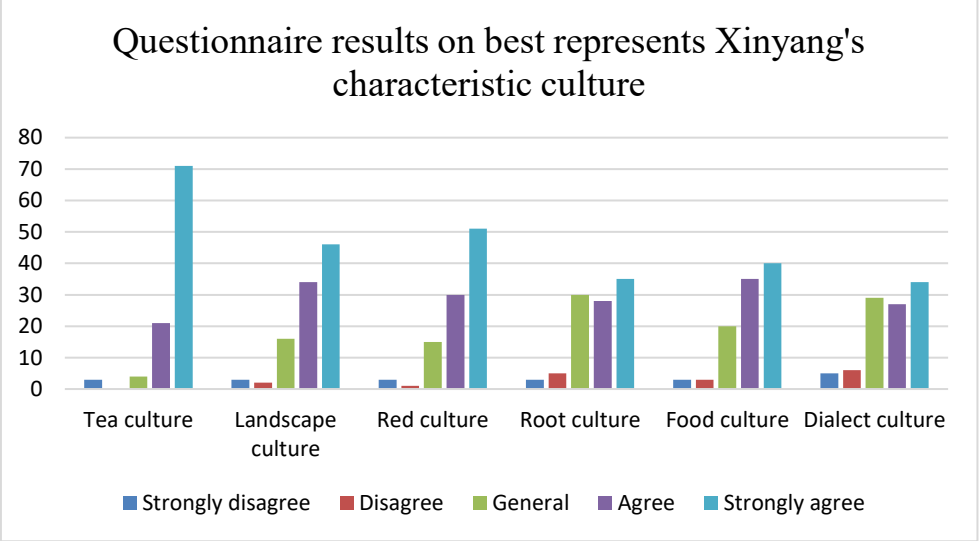


Figure 4.9： Questionnaire Results on Best Represents Xinyang's Characteristic Culture (Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.4.

What do you think best represents Xinyang's characteristic culture [Matrix Scale Question] *

Table 4.4： Questionnaire Results on Best Represents Xinyang's Characteristic Culture

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Tea culture	3%	0%	4%	21%	71%	4.58
Landscape culture	3%	2%	16%	34%	46%	4.19
Red culture	3%	1%	15%	30%	51%	4.24

Root culture	3%	5%	30%	28%	35%	3.86
Food culture	3%	3%	20%	35%	40%	4.03
Dialect culture	5%	6%	29%	27%	34%	3.79
subtotal	3%	3%	19%	29%	46%	4.11

Source: Author collected

The results of the questionnaire survey show that the cultural landmarks of Xinyang can be positioned as Ji Gong Mountain and Nan Wan Lake, which are two very famous attractions in Xinyang (Figure 4.10). One is Ji Gong Mountain, one of the four major summer resorts in China, and the other is Nan Wan Lake, the Pearl of South Henan, which is 12 times larger than West Lake in Hangzhou.

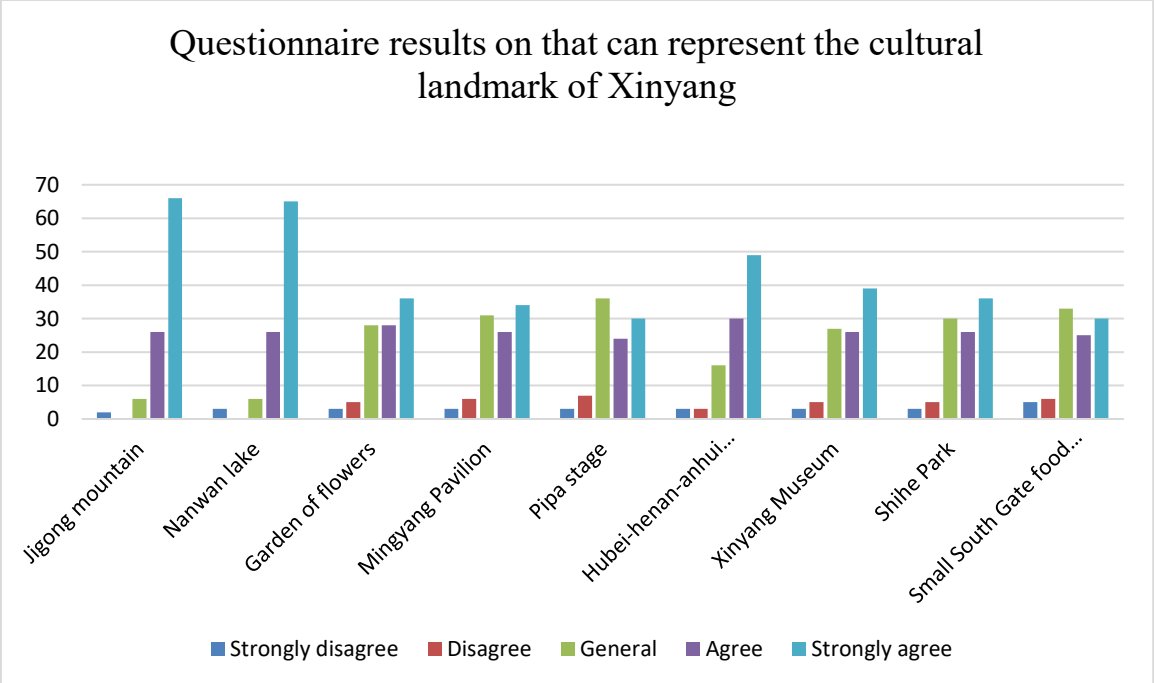


Figure 4.10： Questionnaire Results on That Can Represent the Cultural Landmark of Xinyang

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.5.

What do you think can represent the cultural landmark of Xinyang [Matrix Scale Question] *

The average score of the matrix questions：**4.01**

Table 4.5： Data Ratios and Scores for the Questions That Can Represent the Cultural Landmark of Xinyang

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Jigong mountain	2%	0%	6%	26%	66%	4.53
Nanwan lake	3%	0%	6%	26%	65%	4.5
Garden of flowers	3%	5%	28%	28%	36%	3.9
Mingyang Pavilion	3%	6%	31%	26%	34%	3.81
Pipa stage	3%	7%	36%	24%	30%	3.69
Hubei-Henan-Anhui Revolutionary Memorial Hall	3%	3%	16%	30%	49%	4.2
Xinyang Museum	3%	5%	27%	26%	39%	3.92
Shihe Park	3%	5%	30%	26%	36%	3.87
Small South Gate food street	5%	6%	33%	25%	30%	3.69
subtotal	3%	4%	24%	26%	43%	4.01

Source: Author collected

When it comes to the cultural attractions that the respondents recommend to tourists in Xinyang, most of them recommend Ji Gong Mountain and Nan Wan Lake, which are the most prominent, and then are the famous tea culture-related bases (natural and cultural attractions) in Xinyang, as shown in Figure 4.11.

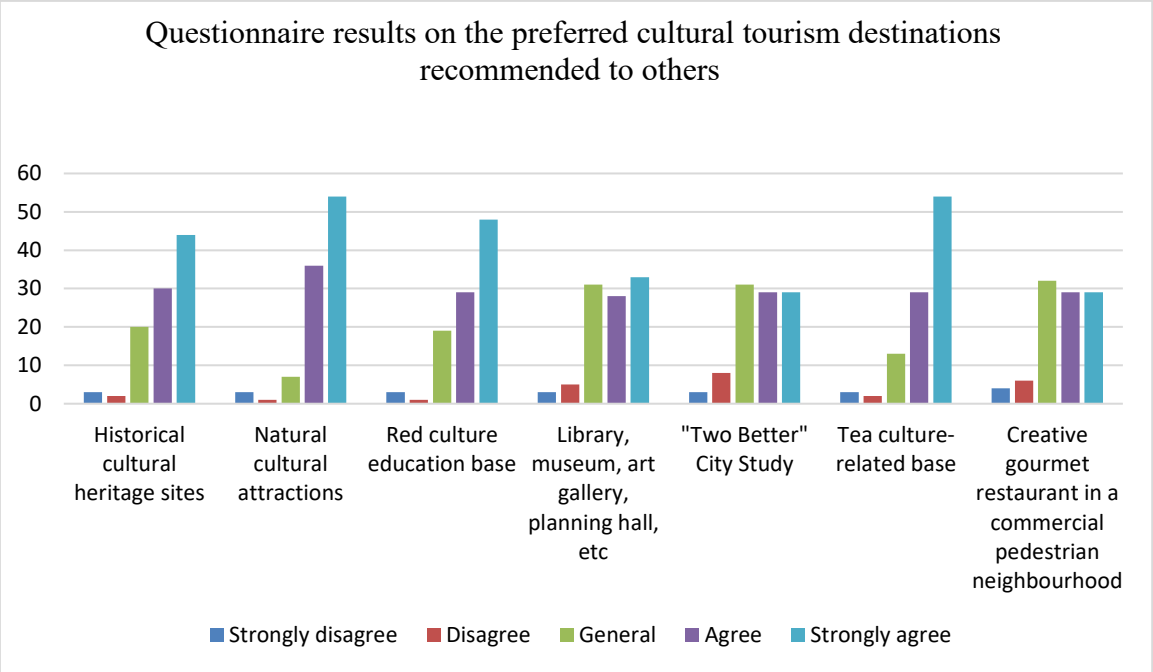


Figure 4.11：Questionnaire Results on the Preferred Cultural Tourism Destinations Recommended to Others

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.6.

When you recommend Xinyang City cultural tourism to others, the preferred destination is

[Matrix scale question] *

The average score of the matrix questions：**4.03**

Table 4.6: Data Ratios and Scores for the Questions that Preferred Cultural Tourism Destinations Recommended to Others

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Historical cultural heritage sites	3%	2%	20%	30%	44%	4.1
Natural cultural attractions	3%	1%	7%	36%	54%	4.38
Red culture education base	3%	1%	19%	29%	48%	4.18
Library, museum, art gallery, planning hall, etc	3%	5%	31%	28%	33%	3.84
“Two Better” City Study	3%	8%	31%	29%	29%	3.73
Tea culture-related base	3%	2%	13%	29%	54%	4.29
Creative gourmet restaurant in a commercial pedestrian neighbourhood	4%	6%	32%	29%	29%	3.71
subtotal	3%	4%	22%	30%	41%	4.03

Source: Author collected

The Questionnaire results on the cultural tourism products that citizens know about Xinyang are shown in Figure 4.12. There are 6 options for this question: Time-honored traditional handicrafts, Modern exquisite hand gifts (tea and other special products), Scenic spot souvenir, Characteristic cultural clothing, accessories, Creative food and drinks, New cultural and creative products. Overall, the percentage of respondents who agreed with each option was not particularly high; the highest was just Modern exquisite hand gifts (tea and other special products). The average score is 4.28. This shows that Xinyang city cultural tourism products are still relatively scarce, and there is no creativity, just a relatively natural agricultural tea.

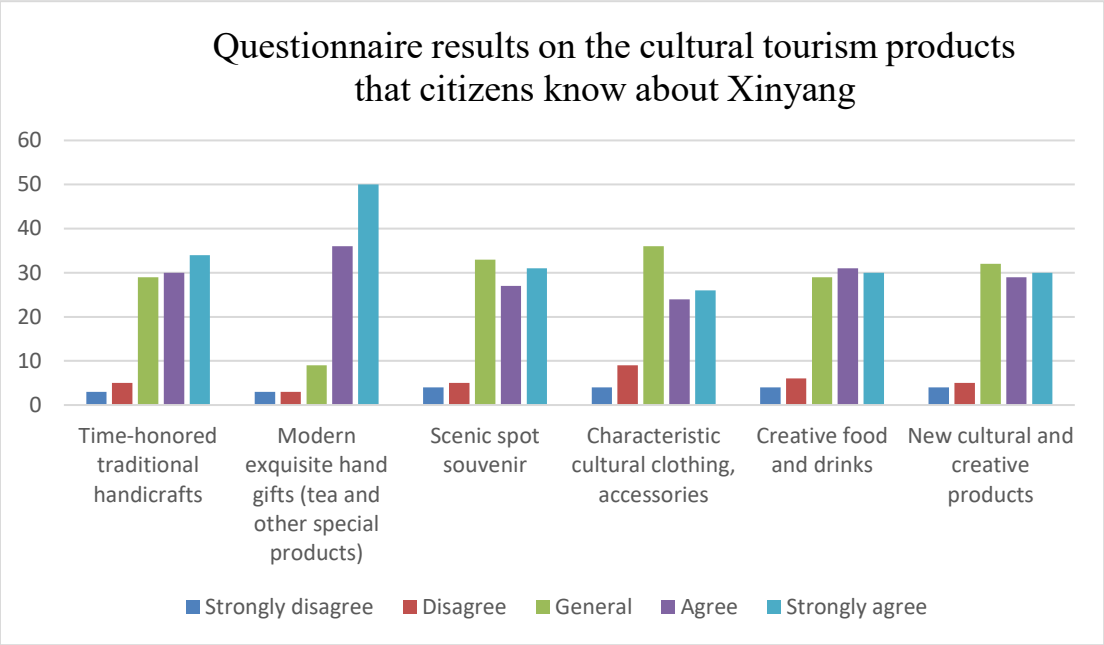


Figure 4.12： Questionnaire Results on the Cultural Tourism Products that Citizens Know about Xinyang

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.7.

You know Xinyang has the following city cultural tourism products [Matrix scale question] *

The average score of the matrix questions：**3.84**

Table 4.7： Data Ratios and Scores for the Questions that the Cultural Tourism Products that Citizens Know about Xinyang

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Time-honored traditional handicrafts	3%	5%	29%	30%	34%	3.85
Modern exquisite hand gifts (tea and other special products)	3%	3%	9%	36%	50%	4.28

Scenic spot souvenir	4%	5%	33%	27%	31%	3.77
Characteristic cultural clothing, accessories	4%	9%	36%	24%	26%	3.6
Creative food and drinks	4%	6%	29%	31%	30%	3.78
New cultural and creative products	4%	5%	32%	29%	30%	3.77
subtotal	3%	5%	28%	30%	34%	3.84

Source: Author collected

In a survey of questions about the cultural activities in your city that people are most familiar with, the result shows that People are more familiar with the Tea culture festival and the South Bay Lake Fishing Festival, food festival. The average score was 4.47 and 4.23. The other scores are shown in Figure 4.13.

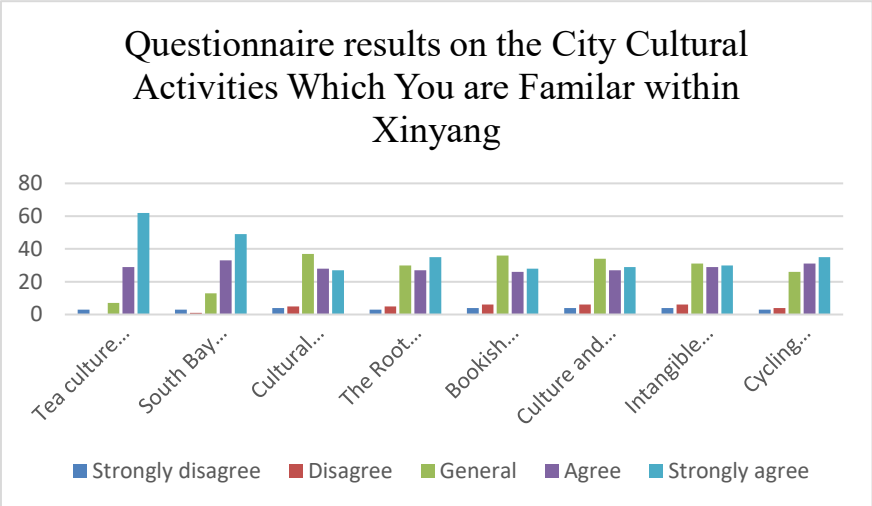


Figure 4.13： Questionnaire Results on the City Cultural Activities Which You are Familiar with in Xinyang

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.8.

You are more familiar with the following city cultural activities in Xinyang [Matrix scale question] *

The average score of the matrix questions：**3.91**

Table 4.8： Data Ratios and Scores for the Questions that the City Cultural Activities Which You are Familiar with in Xinyang

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Tea culture festival	3%	0%	7%	29%	62%	4.47
South Bay Lake Fishing Festival, food festival	3%	1%	13%	33%	49%	4.23
Cultural events and music festivals	4%	5%	37%	28%	27%	3.7
The Root Pro Cultural Festival	3%	5%	30%	27%	35%	3.85
Bookish reading activities	4%	6%	36%	26%	28%	3.68
Culture and art exhibition, creative market	4%	6%	34%	27%	29%	3.71
Intangible cultural heritage handicraft experience activity	4%	6%	31%	29%	30%	3.76
Cycling marathon and other sports and fitness activities	3%	4%	26%	31%	35%	3.9
subtotal	3%	4%	27%	29%	37%	3.91

Source: Author collected

4.3.4 Summary

After the corresponding study of the cultural resources in Xinyang City, it is found that Xinyang has rich and diverse cultural resources, such as the famous tea culture, landscape culture, red culture, root culture, food culture, and dialect culture. One of the most representative is the tea culture. In a survey of cultural landmarks that represent Xinyang City and tourist attractions that are most likely to be recommended to tourists, the tea cultural-related bases and natural attractions in Xinyang (Ji Gong Mountain and Nan Wan Lake) were the most favourable, therefore, Xinyang City culture brand positioning can be

constructed from tea culture and landscape culture, Xinyang city can be positioned as a landscape tea capital and livable Xinyang. Secondly, in the survey of Xinyang city's cultural resources, there is a lack of cultural tourism products in the city, and almost everyone is unfamiliar with any particularly famous and distinctive cultural tourism products that can be used as tourist souvenirs and accompanying gifts, except for tea. It is necessary and feasible to transform Xinyang's cultural resources into creative tourism products to enhance Xinyang's popularity and image. Finally, among the cultural events in Xinyang City, the more famous and prominent ones that are also familiar to people are the Xinyang International Tea Culture Festival and the Nan Wan Lake Open Fish Festival, food festivals, and of course, the Roots Culture Festival, sports and fitness events such as cycling marathons, cultural events and music festivals, cultural and art exhibitions, creative bazaars, and non-heritage handicrafts experience activities, and so on. However, most people are not familiar with these cultural activities due to low visibility, insufficient publicity, insufficient scope of participation, insufficient organisation and service, and insufficient creativity. Therefore, at a later stage, the popularity of Xinyang city culture can be increased by increasing publicity, expanding the range of participants, effectively organising and serving participants, and innovating cultural activities to improve the popularity and image of Xinyang's cultural brand.

4.4 Third Objective

The third objective is to propose how to design and effectively implement creative strategies—including marketing activities, publicity, and promotion—to enhance the recognition and image of Xinyang City's cultural brand and establish a positive brand image in the market.

To achieve this objective, this study will use the literature method, questionnaire survey method, case method, and inductive analysis method. Through in-depth analysis, reference to the excellent experience of other city cultural brand building at home and abroad, combined with the theory of city brand marketing and integrated brand communication theory, this paper puts forward effective and specific creative strategies to enhance Xinyang city cultural brand, to improve the influence, popularity and attractiveness of the city cultural brand of Xinyang, and to establish a positive brand image in the market.

4.4.1 City Brand Marketing Theory

Professor Kveni Lnae Kelle of the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University, USA, points out in his book Strategic Brand Management that: The ubiquity of branding makes it possible to brand more things, such as individuals, organisations, regions, and even attention spans, in addition to products. The power of a brand is to enable people to recognise it and to establish a link between a geographical location and a rational symbol, so that cities can also be branded. According to Philip Kotler, the father of modern marketing, any country, city, or even town can be ‘place-marketed’, encouraging different places to build their reality as a competitive advantage and brand image for living, travelling, and investing. He pointed out that: “Marketing a city must consider the city's social, historical, cultural, natural environment and many other factors, from the perspective of the market economy, the city's role in the overall regional environment, as well as competitors, target audiences and other aspects of the situation, from the fusion of multiple elements, through the creation, delivery and dissemination of high-quality customer value. Acquire, retain and increase customers”. The fusion of these two concepts is city brand marketing, in terms of its practical significance, the emergence of the city brand is not accidental, it is extended from the commodity brand, enterprise brand, is the inevitable requirements of social development and market economy

development. City brand marketing can show the city characteristics, increase the charm of the city, attract talent and capital, enhance public trust in the government, and promote the social progress and economic development of the city（Cao, 2009).

4.4.2 Integrated Brand Communication Theory

The theory of integrated brand communication comes from the theory of integrated marketing. The main points of Schultz's integrated marketing communication theory (IMC) are selectively inherited, and the core and connotation of IMC are further innovated. Integrated brand communication, that is, brand communication activities carried out through omni-channel communication strategy around the core value of the brand. The goal is to align the audience with the brand's core values (Duan, 2014). On the one hand, the core point of integrated brand communication theory is to maximize brand value based on brand core value；On the other hand, the focus of integrated brand communication is integration, which runs through the brand development, and is an overall communication strategy that integrates a variety of communication activities including public relations, advertising, and other communication means. Based on the core value, the brand interacts with consumers around cultural and spiritual values, and ultimately achieves consumers' cognition, recognition and identification of the brand value until it reaches the highest level of value resonance, which is the real purpose of the integrated brand communication theory, and helps the brand to really achieve the maximisation of the brand value and the enhancement of the brand influence.

Applying the theory of integrated brand communication to the study of city brand is the need of the times and has strong practical significance. The integrated marketing communication of city can make up for the defects of the city brand communication in our country for a long time. Based on brand positioning and brand core value, integrated

communication integrates communication tools and communication process, specifically including communication subject, communication content, communication channel, communication form and communication effect（Ren, 2020).

The theory of integrated brand communication provides the methodological basis for this study, and it is also of great significance in the communication of city cultural brands. Based on the theory of integrated brand, this paper innovates the integrated communication path of city cultural brands by effectively integrating the communication subject, communication content, communication form, communication channel, and communication effect of city cultural brands. This study discusses the creative strategy of promoting the Xinyang City cultural brand from the perspective of integrated brand communication, focuses on the problem of Xinyang City cultural brand construction from the perspective of city brand marketing, and establishes the framework of creative strategy for promoting Xinyang city cultural brand, to enhance the influence, popularity, and attraction of Xinyang City cultural brand.

4.4.3 Previous Research about Strategies for City Cultural Brand Building

As this part of the data has already been presented in sections 2.5 and 2.6, the researchers will not collect this part of the data again at this stage, but will directly use the conclusions in section 2.6.

It is understood that in the previous research results, there are many strategies to promote city cultural brands. These include the creation of architectural designs and landmarks, the creation of cultural images and slogans, the organization of cultural festivals, the organization of large-scale events, the theme of culture, the display of cultural identity,

the use of museums to build brands, the use of historical stories in marketing, city renewal and planning, cultural flagship investments, cultural capitals, etc. For details, see Table 2.13.

The views of these scholars on city cultural brand building strategies do not cover all aspects of city cultural brand building strategies, and there may be other innovative strategies that have not been put forward yet. In addition, with the development of the economy and society, there will be more and updated ways of city cultural brand communication, and there may be updated strategies for city cultural brand building in the future. Therefore, based on previous studies, this study will explore and discuss the creativity strategy for enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City, China.

4.4.4 The Research Strategy of the Previous Researchers on the Construction of Xinyang City Cultural Brand

Through the literature collection and search, it is found that there are very few research results on the construction of Xinyang City's cultural brand. Through the search for Xinyang city cultural brand, there are only a few pieces of literature with high theme relevance, as shown in the following (Table 4.9). There is also research on the Xinyang city brand. For example, Yan Min (2008) proposed the core values of the new city brand “Tea city culture, quality life, red tourism and charm of Xinyang” based on the original city brand. On the premise of keeping its core values unchanged, the disadvantages and advantages of Xinyang’s resources, which need to be improved and can be better developed, were improved, and innovated. To enhance the value of the city brand, it also gives specific strategic suggestions on the promotion of Xinyang city brand value from four aspects (cultural innovation, industrial structure innovation, environmental innovation, human resource innovation). Other research results are only about some of Xinyang’s cultural

resources, but do not mention the specific construction strategy of Xinyang's city cultural brand, so we mainly do cultural resources background reference.

Table 4.9： Previous Scholars on Xinyang City Cultural Brand Strategy Research

published time	author	theme	strategy
2010.5	Huang Yi	Research on Xinyang city marketing strategy based on cultural heritage mining	Xinyang should use Xinyang Mao Jian public brand strategy, Xinyang tourist attractions marketing strategy, Xinyang cultural heritage marketing strategy and Xinyang folk culture marketing strategy , to gradually establish its own brand and city logo.
2014.10	Xiao Yong	Analysis on shaping Xinyang tea culture brand	Accurate positioning of tea culture, to create Xinyang exclusive tea culture brand； Multimedia interaction to promote Xinyang tea culture brand； Actively train and introduce talents, and carry out brand innovation of tea culture. Standardize tea culture brand management and maintain brand image.
2015.10	Dong Jianyi	The popularization of Xinyang's "tea culture" is an exploration of the construction of a city's cultural brand	The popularization of Xinyang's "tea culture" illustration is of positive significance to the construction of Xinyang's city cultural brand. Through the communication subjects, communication channels, and culture itself, the communication of tea culture is strengthened and the characteristic cultural brand is built.

2023.5	Li Shiyu	The path and strategy of digital media enabling city cultural brand construction -- taking the publicity effect of “Better Life looking at Xinyang” as an example	Digital media technology has become an important technical support and communication carrier for building city cultural brands. As a county-level financial media center to build grassroots public opinion positions, it is more necessary to give play to its own regional characteristics and advantages, work hard in the “four degrees” (height, depth, temperature, speed) of publicity strategy, create news products with good traffic and reputation, constantly meet the people’s growing needs for a better life, and create a high-level city cultural brand.

Source: Author collected

4.4.5 Exploratory Study on Xinyang Cultural Brand Building Strategy

Through literature research, website resources, relevant platform data, and field investigation, the researcher sorted out the strategic path of cultural brand construction of outstanding cities at home and abroad. In combination with the actual situation of cultural resources of Xinyang City in China, the researcher initially proposed some strategic paths for promoting the cultural brand of Xinyang City, as shown in Table 4.10. That is, the third part of the questionnaire survey is about the content of the strategy path.

In your opinion, the creativity strategy to promote Xinyang City's cultural brand should focus on the following aspects [Matrix scale question] *

Table 4.10： The Creativity Strategies Need to Focus on for Enhancing the Xinyang City Cultural Brand

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Highlight the cultural landmark design, and further clarify the Xinyang city cultural brand positioning	○	○	○	○	○
More distinctive and innovative cultural events will be launched	○	○	○	○	○
Explore and protect cultural heritage and traditions, and strengthen research and development and design of cultural and creative products	○	○	○	○	○
Provide more tourist routes and attractions, improve the quality of public facilities and landscape design	○	○	○	○	○
Establish an image of an open, fair, clean, efficient, pragmatic, and innovative government for the people	○	○	○	○	○
strengthen community cultural activities	○	○	○	○	○
Improve the moral quality and accomplishment	○	○	○	○	○

of the Xinyang people					
We will give play to the role of scientific research institutes and universities in inheriting culture	○	○	○	○	○
Launch story marketing and brand inheritance, and innovate the methods and approaches of city cultural brand promotion	○	○	○	○	○
Strengthen the development of cultural industries and integration of science and technology	○	○	○	○	○
Strengthen cooperation and exchanges with other cities	○	○	○	○	○
To enhance public awareness of broad participation	○	○	○	○	○

Source: Author designed

4.4.6 Xinyang Residents' Attitude and Strategic Understanding of Xinyang City Cultural Brand Construction

Through the questionnaire survey results, it is found that people's understanding of Xinyang City's cultural brand construction is relatively representative and unified.

As for the question of which aspects Xinyang should strengthen in cultural brand building, the four options given are the quality of cultural products, the construction of cultural facilities, cultural activities and festivals, and the intensity of cultural publicity. Most of the respondents agree, as shown in Figure 4.14. The full score is 5, and the matrix score

is about 4.4. It shows that Xinyang's current city cultural brand construction is not enough in these aspects, and needs to be strengthened and improved.

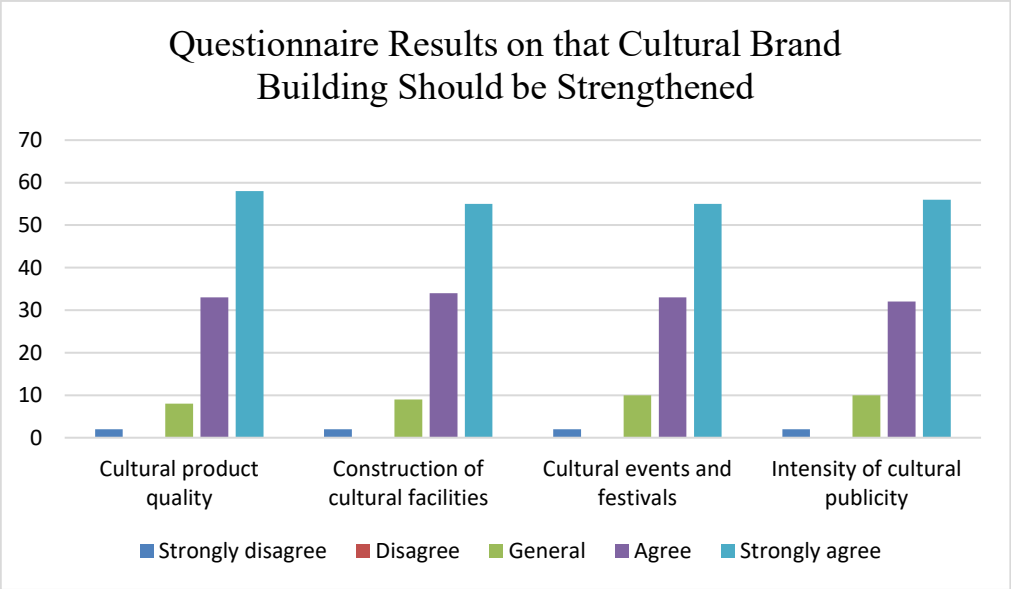


Figure 4.14： Questionnaire Results on that Cultural Band Building Should be Strengthened

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.11.

In your opinion, Xinyang should strengthen the construction of cultural brand in the following aspects

The average score of the matrix questions：**4.41**

Table 4.11： Data Ratios and Scores for the Question that Cultural Brand Building Should be Strengthened

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Cultural product quality	2%	0%	8%	33%	58%	4.44
Construction of cultural facilities	2%	0%	9%	34%	55%	4.4
Cultural events and festivals	2%	0%	10%	33%	55%	4.38
Intensity of cultural publicity	2%	0%	10%	32%	56%	4.41
subtotal	2%	0%	9%	33%	56%	4.41

Source: Author collected

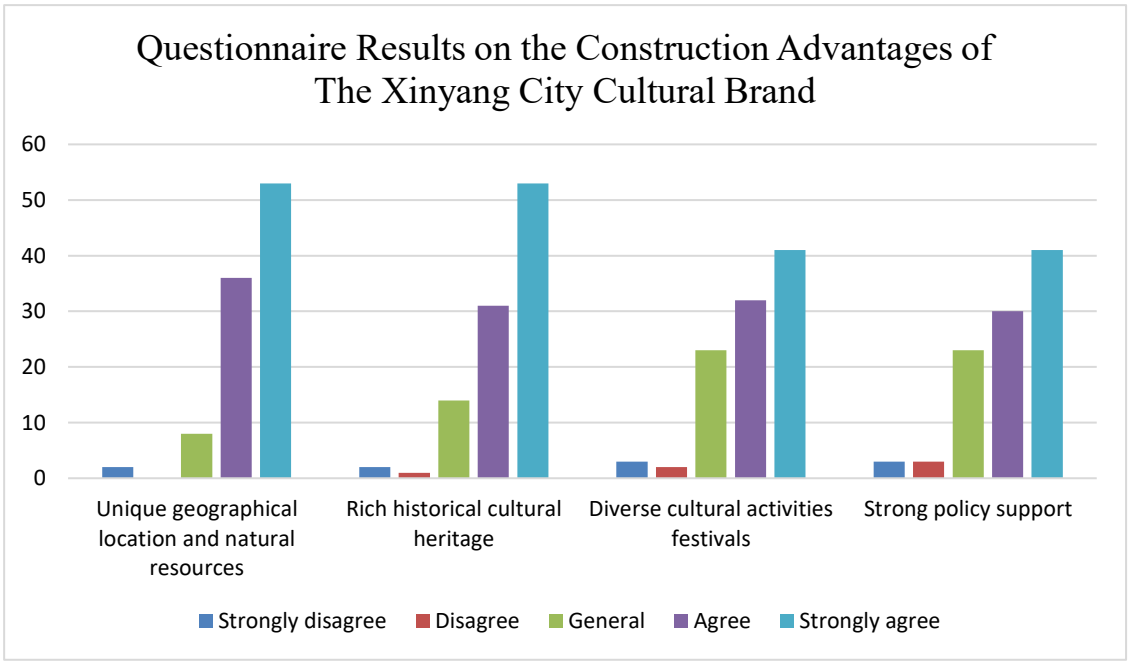


Figure 4.15： Questionnaire Results on the Construction Advantages of the Xinyang City Cultural Brand

(Source: Author collected)

As for the advantages of Xinyang residents to the construction of the Xinyang city cultural brand, the questionnaire results show a unique geographical location and natural resources、Rich historical cultural heritage, an approval rate is very high， of course, Diverse cultural activities and festivals, Strong policy support are also highly recognized by people. As shown in Figure 4.15. However, there is still room for improvement, for example, there can be more updated ways and means for diverse cultural activities, and there can also be more supportive ways for policy support. All these need to be explored and discussed in depth.

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.12.

The advantages of Xinyang City cultural brand construction [Matrix scale question] *

Table 4.12： Data Ratios and Scores for the Specific Questions that Construction Advantages of the Xinyang City Cultural Brand

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Unique geographical location and natural resources	2%	0%	8%	36%	53%	4.38
Rich historical cultural heritage	2%	1%	14%	31%	53%	4.31
Diverse cultural activities festivals	3%	2%	23%	32%	41%	4.06
Strong policy support	3%	3%	23%	30%	41%	4.03
subtotal	2%	2%	17%	32%	47%	4.19

Source: Author collected

In the investigation of Shortcomings of Xinyang City cultural brand construction, the data show that: Lack of name recognition and exposure, Lack of innovation and differentiation, Lack of professional and effective brand marketing strategy, and lack of

capital. All four options were supported by large majorities (shown in Figure 4.16). The popularity and exposure of the Xinyang cultural brand are still very insufficient, the creativity and differentiation of the Xinyang cultural brand are not enough, the Xinyang cultural brand lacks a professional and effective brand marketing strategy, and there is a relative lack of funds for the construction of the Xinyang cultural brand. Therefore, to enhance the creative strategy of Xinyang cultural brand, we must work on these shortcomings.

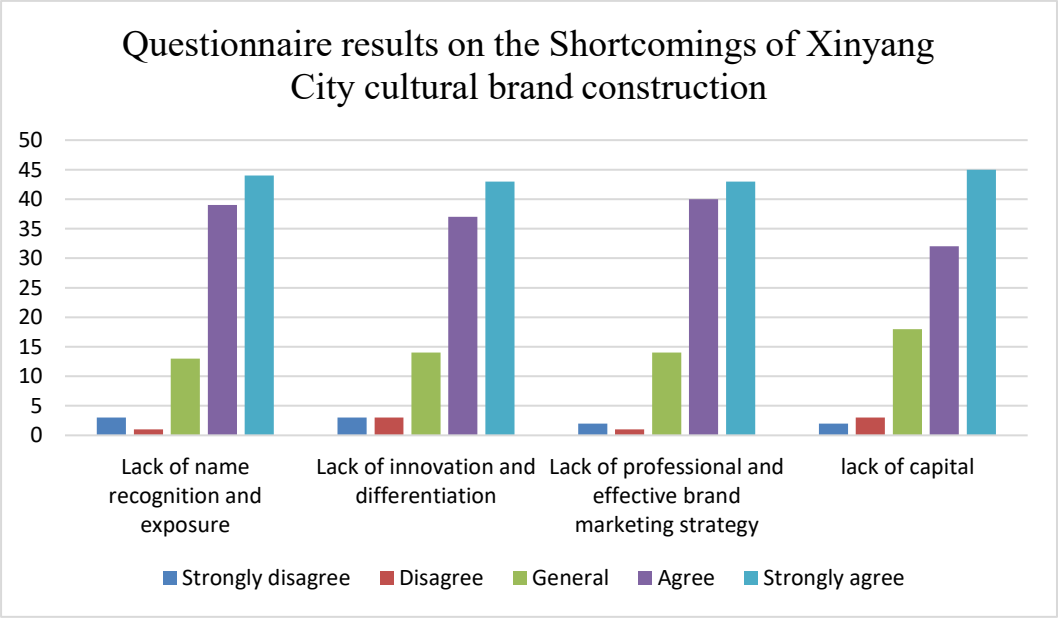


Figure 4.16： Questionnaire Results on the Shortcomings of Xinyang City Cultural Brand Construction

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.13.

In your opinion, Xinyang should strengthen the construction of cultural brand in the following aspects [Matrix scale question] *

The average score of the matrix questions：**4.17**

Table 4.13： Data Ratios and Scores for the Questions that Shortcomings of Xinyang City Cultural Brand Construction

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Lack of name recognition and exposure	3%	1%	13%	39%	44%	4.19
Lack of innovation and differentiation	3%	3%	14%	37%	43%	4.15
Lack of professional and effective brand marketing strategy	2%	1%	14%	40%	43%	4.2
lack of capital	2%	3%	18%	32%	45%	4.15
subtotal	2%	2%	15%	37%	44%	4.17

Source: Author collected

As for the strategies on enhancing the Xinyang cultural brand, the questionnaire roughly listed 12 creative strategies for promoting city cultural brands. First, Highlight the cultural landmark design, and further clarify the Xinyang city cultural brand positioning，second, More distinctive and innovative cultural events will be launched，third, Explore and protect cultural heritage and traditions, and strengthen research and development and design of cultural and creative products，fourth, Provide more tourist routes and attractions, improve the quality of public facilities and landscape design，fifth, Establish an image of an open, fair, clean, efficient, pragmatic, and innovative government for the people，sixth,Sstrengthen community cultural activities, seventh, Improve the moral quality and accomplishment of the Xinyang people，eighth, Give play to the role of scientific research institutes and universities in inheriting culture，ninth, Launch story marketing and brand inheritance, and innovate the methods and approaches of city cultural brand promotion，tenth, Strengthen the development of cultural industries and integration of science and

technology，eleventh, Strengthen cooperation and exchanges with other cities，finally, To enhance public awareness of broad participation. According to the results of the questionnaire survey data, the proportion of strongly agree and agree for each strategy is over 80%, (as shown in the Figure4.17). The average score of the matrix questions is 4.35. which indicates that all the strategies proposed in the questionnaire are worthy of consideration.

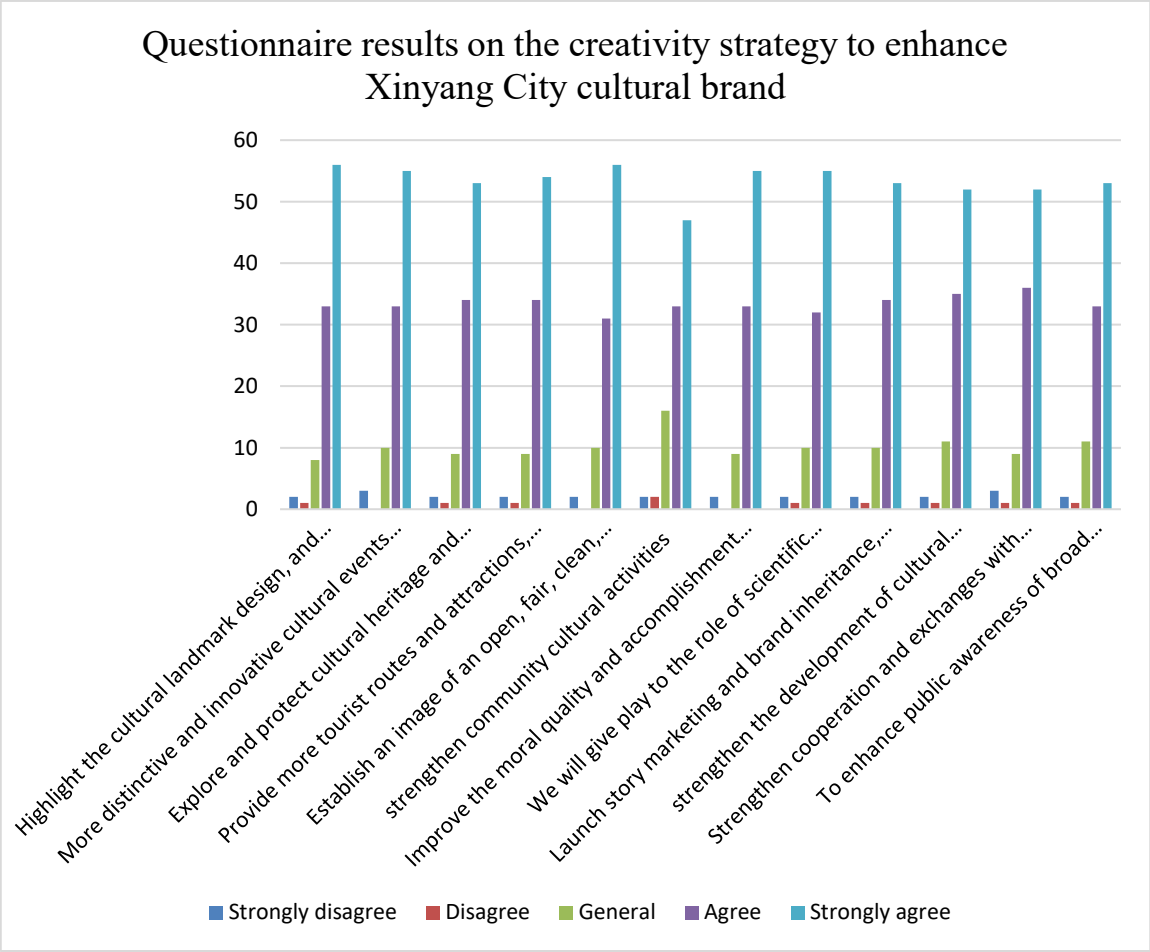


Figure 4.17：Questionnaire Results On The Creativity Strategy To Enhance Xinyang City Cultural Brand

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.14.

In your opinion, the creativity strategy to promote Xinyang City's cultural brand should focus on the following aspects

The average score of the matrix questions：**4.35**

Table 4.14： Data Ratios and Scores for the Specific Questions that Creativity Strategy to Enhance Xinyang City Cultural Brand

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Highlight the cultural landmark design, and further clarify the Xinyang city cultural brand positioning	2%	1%	8%	33%	56%	4.41
More distinctive and innovative cultural events will be launched	3%	0%	10%	33%	55%	4.37
Explore and protect cultural heritage and traditions, and strengthen research and development and design of cultural and creative products	2%	1%	9%	34%	53%	4.36
Provide more tourist routes and attractions, improve the quality of public facilities and landscape design	2%	1%	9%	34%	54%	4.38
Establish an image of an open, fair, clean, efficient, pragmatic, and innovative government for the people	2%	0%	10%	31%	56%	4.4
strengthen community cultural activities	2%	2%	16%	33%	47%	4.21

Improve the moral quality and accomplishment of the Xinyang people	2%	0%	9%	33%	55%	4.38
We will give play to the role of scientific research institutes and universities in inheriting culture	2%	1%	10%	32%	55%	4.36
Launch story marketing and brand inheritance, and innovate the methods and approaches of city cultural brand promotion	2%	1%	10%	34%	53%	4.35
strengthen the development of cultural industries and integration of science and technology	2%	1%	11%	35%	52%	4.33
Strengthen cooperation and exchanges with other cities	3%	1%	9%	36%	52%	4.34
To enhance public awareness of broad participation	2%	1%	11%	33%	53%	4.33
subtotal	2%	1%	10%	33%	53%	4.35

Source: Author collected

4.4.7 Creativity Strategy Framework on Propagating the Cultural Brand for Xinyang City

After the city culture brand is shaped, the most important thing is to enhance the popularity of the city culture brand. In today's highly developed information era, there are many ways for people to obtain information, so there are also many ways to spread the city culture brand. In the questionnaire about Xinyang's cultural branding strategy, the results of the questionnaire about the general ways and platforms for people to learn about the city's culture are shown in Figure 4.18. Data survey results show that in today's era, people learn

more about city culture from various new media platforms and new media short video platforms, such as WeChat 、Weibo、XiaoHongshu、 Douyin、Kuaishou、Bstation, etc.

The proportion of people using other traditional information dissemination platforms is relatively small. Therefore, in terms of the way of communication of the city's cultural brand, it is possible to focus on new media platforms and new media short video platforms for publicity, and at the same time make full use of the traditional information dissemination platforms as a supplement, to carry out all-around dissemination of the city's cultural brand in multiple aspects and angles, to obtain a wider and more effective effect.

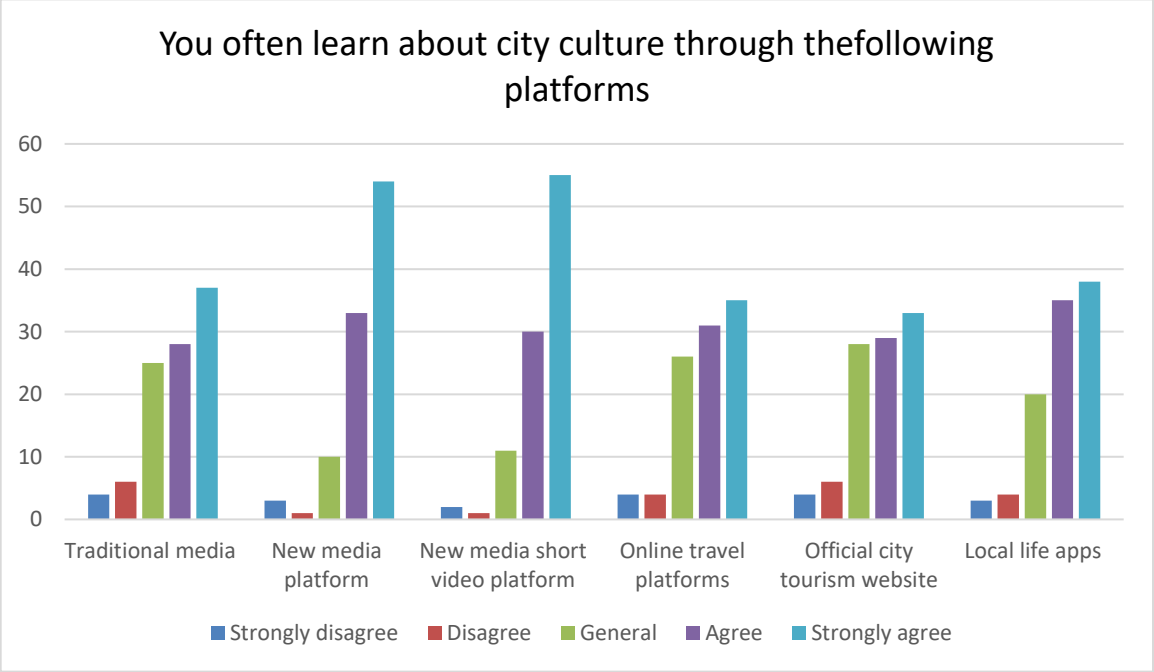


Figure 4.18： Questionnaire Results On the question that You often learn about city culture through the following platforms

(Source: Author collected)

Data ratios and scores for the specific questions are shown in Table 4.15.

You often learn about city culture through the following platforms

The average score of the matrix questions：**4.05**

Table 4.15： Data Ratios and Scores for the Specific Questions that You often learn about city culture through the following platforms

Topic \ option	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree	average score
Traditional media (TV, books, newspapers, etc.)	21(4%)	28(6%)	120(25%)	132(28%)	179(37%)	3.88
New media platform (wechat, Weibo XiaoHongshu, etc.)	12(3%)	4(1%)	47(10%)	160(33%)	257(54%)	4.35
New media short video platform (Douyin, Kuaishou, B station, etc.)	10(2%)	5(1%)	54(11%)	146(30%)	265(55%)	4.36
Online travel platforms (Ctrip, Qunar, Tuniu, etc.)	17(4%)	21(4%)	123(26%)	149(31%)	170(35%)	3.9
Official city tourism website	21(4%)	28(6%)	134(28%)	137(29%)	160(33%)	3.81
Local life apps (Meituan, Dianping, etc.)	15(3%)	18(4%)	96(20%)	167(35%)	184(38%)	4.01
subtotal	96(3%)	104(4%)	574(20%)	891(31%)	1215(42%)	4.05

Source: Author collected

According to the research results obtained from the collation and analysis of the data collected in the early stage, Xinyang City Culture Brand can be positioned as a “Landscape Tea capital, livable Xinyang”. According to the integrated brand communication theory, the creative strategy framework for propagating the Xinyang City culture brand can be

established from the aspects of communication subject, communication content, communication channels, communication forms, and communication effects.

i. Communication Subject

Citizens as the masters of the city, as the main body to create city culture， while continuously enriching and developing the connotation of city culture, people also immerse themselves in the city cultural atmosphere, fully enjoy the results of city culture, and get the nourishment and edification of culture. City residents are the stakeholders of the city's cultural brand construction. Citizens are not only the absorbers of culture, but also the disseminators of culture. As described by Hudson and Hawkins (2006): “In the assessment of key stakeholder groups, local community people are very important because they can help set the atmosphere of a local city for visitors and can also act as credible brand ambassadors for a place. “They play a vital role in the provision of tourism services, and they are both the primary target group for marketing efforts and the most influential local marketers. Through the participation of citizens, they can enhance their self-confidence as the owners of the city, and city audiences can obtain the brand premium of the expected service value. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage, support, and guide the public to actively participate in city image building.

The shaping and dissemination of the city’s cultural brand cannot be separated from the efforts of every resident of the city. Therefore, the public must first be able to take the initiative to enhance the city’s cultural brand as the master of the city’s important force, of course, the power of individuals is limited, through the party and government organs, Xinyang municipal government and relevant departments should do a good job in public publicity activities to publicize tea culture in novel and diversified forms, and adopt a combination of pull and push strategies. In addition to government departments, social

groups, organizations, enterprises, schools, families, and other aspects, even tourists can jointly cultivate the cultural foundation, strengthen the pattern of cultural strength, and develop the city's characteristic culture according to local conditions. Provide an important force for city culture to maintain vigorous vitality.

ii. Content of Communication

Urban cultural brand is a significant symbol of the city's distinctive image; it is the manifestation of the city's comprehensive strength and an important resource of the city's core competitiveness. City core competitiveness refers to the ability of a city or region to attract, compete for, own, control, and transform resources , compete for, occupy, and control the market, create value, and provide welfare for its residents in the process of competition and development compared with other cities or regions. As an intangible and intrinsic element of resource, the cultural brand is undoubtedly an important source of the city's core competitiveness, which has a huge cohesion effect on the city's competitiveness and is a kind of encouraging force and driving force. Xinyang City's cultural brand is mainly reflected in the natural landscape, tea culture, etc. Therefore, the specific communication content of the Xinyang City culture brand can be based on the publicity of the natural landscape and tea culture to formulate creative strategies. Specific strategies can be as follows：

a) City Name

When referring to the cultural brand of a city, people will first think of the name of the city, the name of the city is a symbol that can represent the city, just like the name of a person. The name of the city will give people an association. For example, if we mention Beijing, people can think of the Forbidden City, the Great Wall and the Courtyard; if we mention Shanghai, people can think of modern, fashionable and the Pearl of the Orient; if

we mention Hangzhou, people can think of the West Lake; if we mention Paris, people can think of romance; if we mention New York, people can think of the capital of culture; and if we mention Venice, people can think of the City of Water and so on. As for the name of Xinyang City, although Xinyang City is not a particularly famous big city in China, but simply from the two words of Xinyang, every one of us should like these two words very much, and the connotation of these two words is very positive and beautiful. The word "Xin" in Chinese, people will think of trust, belief, faith, letter, faithfulness, confidence, and so on. The profound meaning of the word "Xin" is that people need to be responsible for what they have said, which is the fundamental of being a man, the way to develop business and the way to govern the world; Being trustworthy and keeping good faith are the universally recognized value standards and basic virtues of the Chinese nation. “Faith” is not only one of the important conditions for the realization of the moral principle of “benevolence”, but also one of the contents of its moral cultivation. “Yang” can be understood as the sun, sunshine, bright, etc., giving people a warm and bright feeling. Therefore, from the point of view of the name of Xinyang city, the two words Xinyang are very good, giving people a positive and energetic feeling, therefore, from the name of the city to promote the promotion of Xinyang city culture brand has very important and positive significance. In addition, Xinyang City was called "Shen Cheng" in ancient times. There are only two cities in China that can be called "Shen Cheng", one is Xinyang and the another is Shanghai. Shanghai is a famous and economically developed coastal city in China. Its name is widely known and popular among people. It is the capital of magic and charm that people yearn for. If the name of Xinyang is associated with Shanghai, it is believed that the popularity of Xinyang will be greatly improved, and the popularity of Xinyang will be promoted by the popularity of

Shanghai. To improve the cultural brand of Xinyang city will be a very meaningful and creative strategy.

Of course, there are many specific strategies: First, we can emphasize the meaning of the name of Xinyang city, so that people will be impressed by it and fall in love with it. Secondly, we can do some publicity for Xinyang city in prominent places on the busy streets of Shanghai, such as the publicity of Shen Cheng culture, so that more people can know and understand Xinyang through different channels. Third, the name of Xinyang can be printed on a variety of promotional products through a variety of creative designs, such as Xinyang's various cultural and creative products, especially cups, t-shirts and many other products, which can not only be sold as souvenirs or given to friends inside and outside the province, at home and abroad, but also very interesting and meaningful. It is also possible to promote Xinyang city culture through various city volunteers wearing t-shirts with eye-catching Xinyang city name, so that more people can know and understand Xinyang, to get close to Xinyang and fall in love with Xinyang, it can improve the image and popularity of Xinyang City, and finally enhance the influence and popularity of Xinyang city cultural brand.

b) Cultural Images and Slogans

City images and slogans encapsulate and simplify what people believe, think, and express. To create the desired perception, choosing cultural symbols that represent a city’s identity is important for successful branding（Rizzi & Dioli, 2010）.

For Xinyang City, it is necessary to design a more vivid and catchy city cultural propaganda slogan, so that Xinyang City's cultural brand can become a well-known brand. It is also necessary to design a more unique and cultural connotation of Xinyang cultural brand identity, through brand design, VI visual image design and other forms, through the visual image to convey the characteristics and image of the city’s cultural brand, to create a

unique Xinyang city cultural brand image, so that people have a deep impression on the city culture. In 2022, Xinyang finally has an official City LOGO. The Xinyang City LOGO includes Xinyang City's cultural characteristics, as shown in Figure 4.19.



Figure 4.19： Xinyang City LOGO
(Source: https://www.logonews.cn/xinyang-new-logo.html)

The LOGO contains regional elements that are unique to Xinyang. The first thing that comes to mind is a bright green Mao Jian young leaves, the form of it just like slowly open eyes, can be seen in a red boat leading out of a blue wave, the clear waters of the Nan Wan Lake reflecting the beautiful Ji Gong Mountain, a round of magnificent red sun rising, sketching out a fresh and elegant landscape scrolls, but also implies a 'look' of the implication of the dynamic tense, act in the real practice, walk in the forefront, highlight the responsibility. Mao Jian tea, Nan Wan Lake, Ji Gong Mountain is the most representative of Xinyang business card, but also a direct embodiment of the excellent ecology of Xinyang; Red Boat symbolises the Party's helm and navigation, leading through the first hundred years, but also leading towards the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation of the second hundred years, to open the construction of socialist modernization of Xinyang a new journey; the red sun symbolizes the sunrise in the East, steam, and righteousness, is based on a new era for us, Practice new ideas, the overall situation, the courage to be the vanguard, for the people's happiness and the source of power. The four characters of "He Nan Xin Yang", using an

exclusive design font, are both recognisable and unique, and the red “Xin” seal in the middle represents Xinyang people's belief in following the Party forever, their trustworthiness, and their determination to strive for a better life. The overall texture of the logo is handsome and transparent, implying that Xinyang's political ecology is clear and righteous, future development is visible, and a better life is within reach. (City · China ·,2022). When we see this LOGO, we can think of the scenery of the city, as well as the image of tea. The city's LOGO reflects the characteristics of the city’s cultural brand and has certain cultural connotations. It can be fully utilised in some of the city's promotional brochures, tourism products, various packages, and other media to promote the city culture of Xinyang, to better enhance the influence, popularity, and attractiveness of Xinyang's cultural brand.



Figure 4.20： City IP Image - Shan Ge & Cha Mei
(Source: https://www.logonews.cn/xinyang-new-logo.html)

In addition to the city LOGO, Xinyang also has a unique city IP (Figure 4.20). Xinyang City IP “Shan Ge & Cha Mei” is two cartoon characters, of which Shan Ge is named

“Lu Yu” and Cha Mei is named “Ye Jia”. “Lu Yu and Ye Jia” not only shows the Xinyang temperament of landscape and tea village, but also makes the regional characteristics, history and culture, local customs, and spiritual styles of Xinyang more vivid and wonderful. (City · China ·,2022) City IP can spread city culture more vividly through various creative designs and publicity, and improve the influence, popularity, and attractiveness of city cultural brands.

c) Creativity Story Content

Nowadays, it is popular for brands to tell stories, and every brand has a journey from its origin to its development. City cultural brands are no exception. Xinyang city cultural resources are very rich, therefore, through the Xinyang city cultural resources, especially some classic cultural resources, stories and legends and other content, such as “mend the pen after sheep are lost”, Zi Lu Wen Jin, Sima Guang smash the jar, Song Shi Jie complained, Mrs. Xi is silence for three years and other historical stories can be displayed and spread through creative stories or other creative art design. It can resonate with citizens or tourists, to achieve a good effect of promoting the city’s cultural brand.

In addition to historical stories, there are many famous scenic spots in Xinyang that can promote Xinyang culture through creative story content. For example, The Hundred Flowers Garden (Figure 4.21), one of the world’s largest flower-themed urban public open spaces, is a window reflecting the history, culture and modern spirit of Xinyang. Located in the core area of Yangshan New District of Xinyang City, the Hundred Flowers Garden covers an area of 201700 square metres, with a green area rate of 70.2% and a green coverage rate of 83%, and the Hundred Flowers Garden has planted more than 500,000 flower seedlings. There are 268 kinds of ornamental plants, such as peonies, tulips, and camellias,

in the garden, which is an important window to show the image of charming Xinyang. The Hundred Flowers Garden Landscape Project emphasises “knowing nature, respecting nature, protecting nature”, while protecting the ecological environment, conserving land resources, and scientific planning, it draws on modern urban landscape design techniques to fully reflect the characteristics of the combination of gardens. It has become a good place for travelling and entertainment for the public (Xinyang Municipal People's Government portal website, 2016).

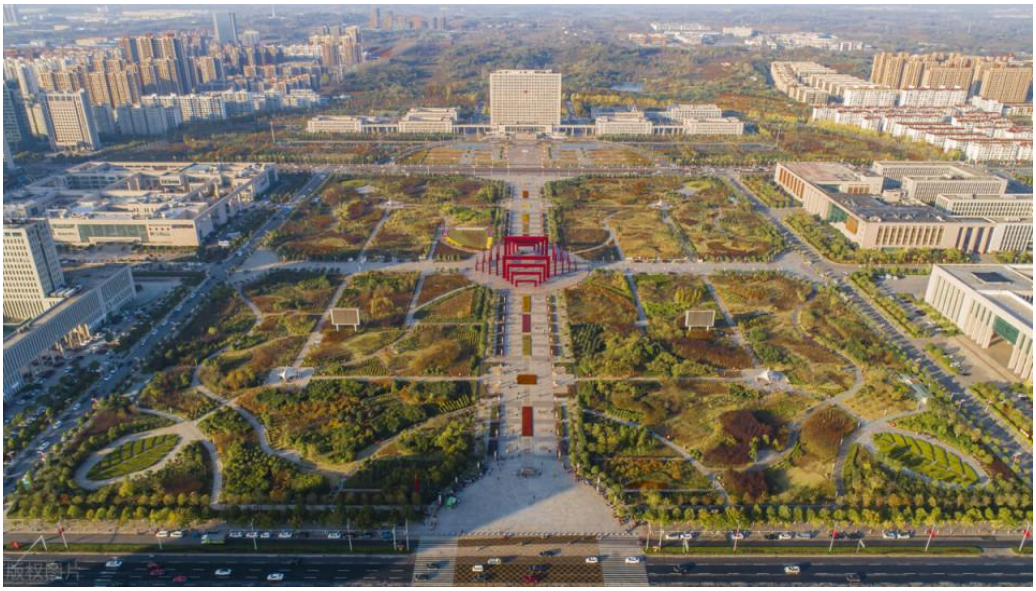


Figure 4.21： Garden of Hundred Flowers in Xinyang City
(Source: https://new.qq.com/rain/a/20230323A0A9BV00)

The garden layout is “one core, two axes, four phases, twelve gardens”. “A core,” that is, the “window” in the centre of the Hundred Flowers Gardens, scattered in all directions. This modern and fashionable “window”, implying that Xinyang people look at the world, walk to the world, and look forward to the world to understand Xinyang, walk into the Xinyang; “window” of the red, implying that the red city of Xinyang will always be a revolutionary nature, “window” of permeability, implying that green Xinyang ushered in

infinite red. The “two axes”, i.e., the century culture axis and the north-south landscape axis in the centre of the park, are the main landscape sight lines to guide the flow of people. The east-west axis symbolises the geographical division line between north and south China, indicating that Xinyang is located on the “Qin Ling-Huai River”, which is the geographical division line between north and south China. The “Four Phases”, i.e., the Green Valley Lace, the Green Flower Street, the Floral Green Embankment, and the Sea of Colourful Flowers, correspond to the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, and create a scenery of blossoming flowers. The “Twelve Gardens” refers to the twelve theme gardens composed of twelve flower fairies according to the different flowering periods of the plants, each of which is configured with flowers like their seasons, creating the beauty of flowers every day and every month. That is, Camellia Garden in January, Spring Garden in February, Azalea Garden in March, Peony Garden in April, Rose Garden in May, Violet Garden in June, Hibiscus Garden in July, Osmanthus Garden in August, Chrysanthemum Garden in September, Hibiscus Garden in October, Red Maple Garden in November, and Lapis Garden in December (Xinyang Municipal People’s Government portal website, 2016).

The Hundred Flowers Garden, as the world’s only largest urban public open space with flowers as its theme, has rich cultural connotations. It can carry out various creative innovations with rich content stories through its geographical location, layout, design, colour, and flower content, and convey the civilization and cultural content of the city of Xinyang to people at home and abroad through a variety of channels. In 2023, Xinyang City successfully created a national ecological civilization construction demonstration zone (Ministry of Ecology and Environment, 2023) (Figure 4.22).


Announcement on Designation of the Seventh Batch of Ecological Civilization Construction Demonstrat

October 2

The General Office of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment issued this document on October 27, 20

The list of the seventh batch of ecological civilization construction demonstrati

(104

Chaoyang District, Beijing

Ninghe District, Tianjin City

Hebei Province, Chengde City, Longhua County of Chengde City

Luo'an County of Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, Lingqiu County of Datong City, and Yuxian County of Yangq

Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Ordos City, Xilingol League, Erlianhot City of Xilingol League, Dongwuzhumenqing Banner of Xilingol L

Shenyang City, Shenbei New District of Liaoning Province, Zhuanghe City of Dalian City, Benxi City

Jilin Province, Baishan City, Jingyu County, Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, Hunchun City

Heilongjiang Province, Yichun City, and Daqing'anlin Region

Jiangsu Province, Nanjing City, Luhe District, Wuxi City, Xinguo District, Changzhou City, Haian City of Nantong, Dafeng District of Yancheng, Yuhang High-tech Zone of Taizhou (Gaoqi

Zhejiang Province, Hangzhou City, Binjiang District, Hangzhou City, Chun'an County, Ningbo City, Jiangbei District of Ningbo City
City of Wenzhou City, Tongxiang City of Jiaxing City, Nanxun District of Huzhou City, Yuecheng District of Shaoxing City

Anhui Province, Wuhu City, Nanling County, Huangshan City, She County of Huangshan City

Fujian Province, Fuzhou City, Jin'an District, Zhangzhou City, Hua'an County, Jianyang District of Nanping City, Yanping District of Nanping City, Pingnan County of Nin

Quannan County, Ganzhou City, Jiangxi Province; Yongxin County, Ji'an City, Jiangxi Province; Hengfeng County, Shangrao City; Yiyang County, Shangrao

Jinan City, Huaiyin District, Jining City, Changqing District, Qingdao City, Lichang District, Jimo District, Zaozhuang City, Xuecheng District, Laishan District, Jining City, Yanzhou District, Shandong Province

District

Shangxian County of Luoyang City, Henan Province, Tongbai County of Nanyang City, and Xinyang City

Figure 4.22： Xinyang City has Successfully Established a National Ecological Civilization Construction Demonstration Zone

(Source: Ministry of Ecology and Environment, 2023)

iii. Channels of Communication

a) Media Transmission

In today's era of rapid network development and information explosion, the role and importance of strategic communication as a weapon of competitive advantage for city branding and product branding are increasing. With the rapid development of modern media, the communication channels of city culture brands are also very rich and diversified. Brand communication is carried out through traditional media such as newspapers, radio, television, magazines, outdoor advertising columns, etc. Online promotion is carried out through

official websites, forums, blogs, and other online platforms to increase the exposure of city culture brands. With the development of the Internet, modern social media can also increase the visibility of city cultural brands. Micro-media platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and Douyin provide an increasingly convenient communication path for brand communication. On these self-media platforms, city subjects, residents, and tourists can spread word-of-mouth through their own knowledge and personal experience, allowing consumers to spontaneously spread the strengths and characteristics of the city's cultural brand through word-of-mouth marketing and user evaluation.

b) Advertising Communication

Advertising is a typical cultural communication channel. As a form of mass cultural communication, advertising not only promotes the consumption of goods and services but also provides higher cultural consumption. Advertising has a cultural communication function mainly because it embodies clear values and social and cultural interactions in the process of information dissemination. Therefore, advertising is not only a means of disseminating information about goods and services, but also an important channel for disseminating culture. It is a bridge connecting material consumption and spiritual consumption, and commodity consumption and cultural consumption. It has been proved that producing excellent, elegant and artistic advertisements plays a vital role in passing on traditional culture, supporting healthy culture and developing advanced culture (Ma, 2007). This is because advertisements can spread local regional cultural concepts and lifestyles and bring them to the destination area, promoting exchanges and communication between different regional cultures. There is still a lack of publicity and advertisements related to Xinyang's cultural brand. The cultural resources of Xinyang city can be further explored through some creative means and integrated into the content of Xinyang city's cultural

advertisements. Through digital marketing, such as social media, short video platforms and other digital channels, release creative content and stories to increase interaction and sharing. Enhance brand awareness and realise the brand effect of Xinyang city culture.

c) Exhibition Communication

The dissemination and promotion of a city's cultural brand can also be achieved through the holding of large-scale exhibitions. For example, Beijing has applied for hosting the Olympic Games, Shanghai has applied for hosting the World Expo, Dalian has held the International Clothing Culture Festival, Hangzhou has held the annual West Lake International Tea Expo and the China International Animation Festival, as well as other cities in the form of the Western China Expo, Xiamen Expo, Guangzhou Expo, etc., to display the city's special products, special tourism projects, local special culture and other products and services that are closely related to people's food, clothing, housing and transport are all good exhibition opportunities and attract a large number of domestic and foreign merchants and tourists. products and services are all good opportunities for display, and attract many domestic and foreign merchants and tourists（Li, 2009). Therefore, to further promote Xinyang city cultural characteristics, Xinyang can be in a variety of activities to strive for the right to hold activities, such as through some public relations activities for a variety of conferences, exhibitions, taking the opportunity to show the Xinyang city style, promote city civilisation, spread the word of mouth of the city, to attract more foreign investment. Xinyang is the capital of Mao Jian, a unique geographical location with, superior natural environment, rich in human resources, and livable conditions. It is believed that Xinyang, with its efforts and strength, will have the opportunity to successfully obtain the right to hold some important conferences and exhibitions, laying a certain foundation for the promotion of the cultural brand.

iv. Mode of Communication

a) Launch a Variety of Creative and Cultural Activities

Over the past three decades, art, culture, and creativity have played a key role in the regeneration of many cities around the world (Evans 2005).

In terms of communication strategies, urban cultural brands can effectively showcase their unique characteristics and appeal through creative initiatives such as cultural events, art exhibitions, and performances. Xinyang's most prominent cultural event is the Xinyang International Tea Culture Festival, held annually in April. Leveraging the brand equity of "Xinyang Maojian" green tea, this festival features large-scale tea culture activities that highlight the city's distinctive heritage. The event has been covered by CCTV, People's Daily, Henan TV Station, mainstream media, and online media of People's Daily, as well as overseas news media such as Hong Kong Commercial Daily. Since the 18th session in 2010, Xinyang Tea Culture Festival has officially changed its name to "Xinyang International Tea Culture Festival - Tea Capital of Chinah". The first tea Festival was held in December 1991. On May 15, 1992, the grand opening ceremony of the Tea Festival was held in the square of the former Xinyang Cultural Center, and the closing ceremony was held on May 22. By the 31st session from April 28 to May 3, 2023, Xinyang City has held a total of 31 tea culture festivals (Qingshan GUI 'an,2023).

Mao Jian and Xinyang city have long been integrated and complement each other. People understand Xinyang from Mao Jian at the beginning. After drinking Mao Jian, people will remember Xinyang, which "gently places the city between mountains and rivers".

Xinyang Tea Culture Festival has long been integrated into the collective memory of Xinyang people, and has profoundly affected Xinyang's economic and social development pattern and Xinyang people's production and life, with a heavy weight.

Xinyang Tea Culture Festival has always been with the times, pioneering and innovative, embracing the times, not only become a well-known tea industry at home and abroad, but also has led to the city's visibility, reputation, and influence continuing to improve, "setting up" a world-renowned city card.

Opening the history of the Tea Festival, we can touch the pulsation of Xinyang's sonorous development: From the original tea promotion to the current tea festival economy, tea culture effect, tea technology innovation, and the integrated development of tea tourism, each new tea culture festival pays more attention to highlighting the theme, pays more attention to brand cultivation, and reflects the flavour of The Times; From the simple tea festival, to the National Famous Tea Expo, China Green Tea Conference, International Tea Expo, and then to the Yu Shang Conference, International Tea Merchant Conference, and Xin Merchant Conference, the tea Culture Festival has been given more and more connotations, and Xinyang Mao Jian has carried more and more expectations.

The tea festival is held every year, and the festival varies from year to year. The most memorable, in 2020, the new coronavirus epidemic is raging, and an online event of "Cloud appreciation of the Mao Jian city" breaks through imagination. The end of the "cloud" festival, the beauty of southern Henan, let Xinyang tea mountain become a flowing scenery, become a poem and a distance in the hearts of hundreds of millions of netizens. More than 100 million people like and follow...

"Let Xinyang go to the world, let the world know Xinyang". Over the past decades, Xinyang Tea Culture Festival has continuously improved in the process of change and unchanged, constantly innovated in keeping with The Times, and played a positive role in promoting the development of Xinyang and cooperation in the tea industry at different stages.

In particular, the tea Culture Festival has entered a new era, the theme of “making friends with tea as a medium” is more accurate, and the purpose of the festival of “the gala of the tea industry and the festival of the public,” is more distinct. Xinyang Tea Culture Festival, this old district of Xinyang’s “gold card”, is more beautiful than new (Feng Huang, Henan,2023).

The Tea Culture Festival is of great significance to the promotion of Xinyang city's cultural brand. Of course, the impact of only one cultural activity is limited. Xinyang also needs to give full play to the advantages of natural landscape culture, and timely launch more diversified creative cultural activities and festivals. For example, using the resources of Ji Gong Mountain, one of China's four major summer resorts, to carry out tourism and cultural festivals, Chongyang Festival hiking, fitness cycling, and other rich and creative activities. It can also innovate the Nan Wan Fishing Festival and Food Festival based on the water resources of Nan Wan Lake, the Pearl of South Henan. It can also take the Xinyang landscape and tea culture as the theme, and rely on Xinyang intangible cultural heritage as resources to launch a variety of art festivals, music festivals, creative design exhibitions, performances, poetry recitation, and other colourful creative activities to show the characteristics and charm of Xinyang city cultural brand. Attract more citizens and tourists to participate in Xinyang cultural activities to enhance the influence, popularity, and attraction of Xinyang's cultural brand.

b) The Design of Cultural Carrier

Make full use of and integrate the city's cultural resources, develop the city's characteristic culture according to local conditions, use the city's cultural resources to vigorously develop cultural and creative industries, through the design of a series of Xinyang city's cultural and creative products, the city's cultural activity spaces (such as dining Spaces,

guesthouse, study, cultural center, art gallerie, museum, etc.) and city cultural public facilities to provide important carriers for the inheritance and development of city culture. New York, known as the “melting pot of cultures”, has rich cultural resources. With more than 2,000 art and cultural institutions and more than 500 galleries thriving, its cultural industry is the only one that can rival the economic benefits of Wall Street. There are not only famous Broadway theaters, numerous museums, and the world’s largest performing arts complex, but also numerous cultural landmarks scattered in every corner of the city. Walking around New York, people can feel the rich cultural atmosphere everywhere. The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, which opened in 1929, has grown from an initial collection of eight paintings and one print to more than 200,000 works of art today. Spanning architecture, art, drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, print, illustration, film, and multimedia, the collection is one of the most distinguished and largest in the world and has made MoMA one of New York’s cultural ICONS (Go Travel City Pass (Shanghai),2023).

At present, places for Xinyang cultural activities, special tourist souvenirs, and cultural derivatives are still very scarce. Therefore, cultural landmark buildings in Xinyang City with unique Xinyang cultural characteristics can be added. Secondly, a series of cultural and creative products and design artefacts can be designed using the landscape and cultural resources and tea culture characteristics of Xinyang City. For example, people often buy a variety of product types used to visit friends and relatives, preserved as a souvenir, some are decorative, some are both beautiful and practical but also has a deep cultural connotation of the product, can contain any product in life, these are all can be used to enhance the Xinyang city cultural brand using imagination and creativity to enhance the creative strategy. As an important window to show the city's image, public cultural facilities often have a variety of connections with people, so urban public cultural facilities play an important role in the

enhancement of the city's cultural brand. At present, there are very few public cultural facilities in Xinyang City, and it is difficult for people to think of public facilities rich in cultural characteristics in Xinyang. Perhaps the only public facility that people can think of is the Mao Jian Bridge, as shown in Figure 4.23. This brings great challenges to the dissemination of Xinyang's cultural brand. It is necessary to give full play to creative design thinking, incorporate Xinyang culture, and design a rich variety of public cultural facilities.

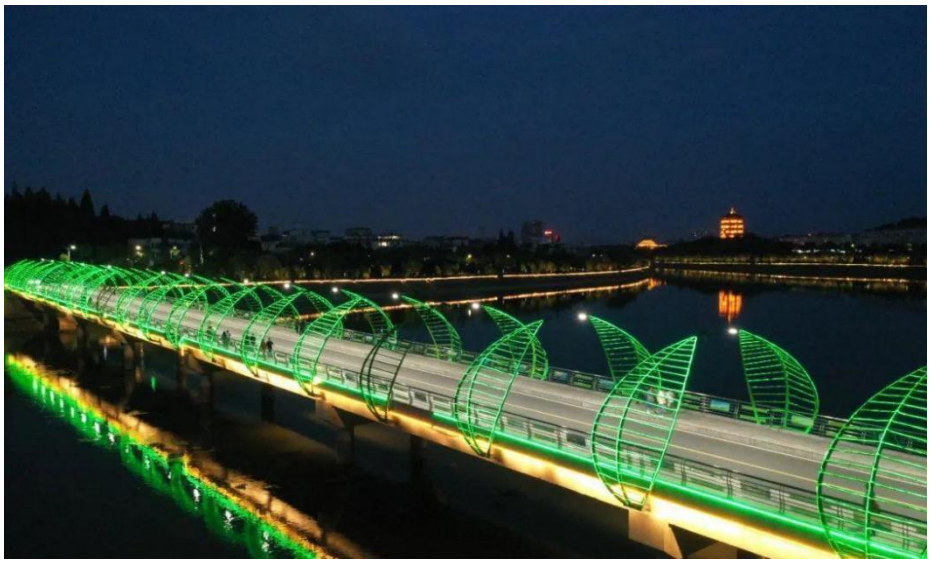


Figure 4.23： Xinyang Tea Bridge
(Source: https://m.xyxun.com/section-7-376297-0.html?btwaf=30729137)

The elements of Xinyang's landscape culture and tea culture can be creatively refined and thus applied to various design works. Firstly, urban art installation design can be carried out by setting up art installations or sculptures with Xinyang cultural characteristics in public spaces, such as innovative bus stops, street lamps, various public signs, park seats, and so on. Secondly, the characteristic elements of Xinyang landscape culture and tea culture can be integrated into the design of various daily necessities used by people in their daily life, such as common and frequently used cups, pillows, key chains, mobile phone cases,

fans, etc., as well as a variety of handicrafts. Moreover, all kinds of clothing that people wear daily can be integrated into the characteristic elements of Xinyang culture brand, and through a variety of unique creative art forms, the cultural characteristics of Xinyang are displayed on these products, thus effectively highlighting the cultural characteristics of Xinyang and attracting eyeballs, thus enhancing the image, popularity and influence of the cultural brand of Xinyang.

c) The Design of City Cultural Propaganda Film

City culture films are important for the shaping of city image. People can learn about a city's culture through the city culture film, so they may be attracted by the city culture, and then have the idea of knowing more about the city, which will eventually make the city become a tourist destination. Through travelling, people can share their feelings in the city and spread the cultural characteristics of the city, so that the city culture can be spread through word of mouth to achieve the effect of enhancing the city culture brand. Therefore, it is very necessary to produce a city culture promotional film to show the city's style, cultural heritage and development achievements through images. For Xinyang, its unique geographical location, beautiful natural scenery, rich historical and cultural resources and intangible cultural heritage, as well as the famous “capital of Mao Jian” and “livable city” title, can all become important content of Xinyang culture film.

d) Spread the City Cultural Brand through City Songs

City is a big family for the citizens, and people can feel the temperature of the city through the city's culture. The cultural soft power of a city is also an important factor in attracting and retaining talent, and music is an important part of city culture. Vienna, as a model of the world music capital, has music as its cultural foundation of the city. It is music that Vienna takes as the entry point of city development, combines almost all resources with

music, creates a distinct cultural personality and brand image of the city theme, and successfully elevates music from culture to industry, creating its unshakable status as the music capital. Using music to give character and soul to the city. Every city has its name, logo, and of course, should have its song. As for Xinyang, the song ‘Xinyang is the most beautiful’ is co-written by Zhang Chunxiang, former Standing Committee Member of Xinyang Municipal Committee, Minister of Propaganda and Vice Mayor of Xinyang, and Wang Yali, a famous musician from Shenzhen, with music composed by Wang Yali and Wen Li, and sung by Yang Le and Liu Nan nan, a young singer. The lyrics of this song are concise and beautiful, the lyrics are full of the cultural characteristics of the city of Xinyang: a thousand years of ageless name, ten thousand years of unchanging beauty, a heavy history, a piece of legendary stories, the charm of the Yu wind and Chu rhyme, containing the breath of the green tea fragrance, the mountains and water connected to the aura of the ancient temples, and feed the hard-working and courageous people, the most beautiful Xinyang, Xinyang is most beautiful, the most beautiful, you are beautiful in the story of the legend, you are beautiful in the fragrance of the tea wafting In the spring, Xinyang is the most beautiful, Xinyang is the most beautiful, you are beautiful in yesterday's beacon, you are beautiful in Xinyang people today's heart. The melody is exciting, beautiful, moving, and easy to sing. In a multimedia information network that is highly developed today, Xinyang's most beautiful city song can be disseminated through a variety of platforms and innovative ways of communication, effectively disseminating Xinyang city culture, enhancing the visibility and influence of Xinyang city culture brand.

e) Cooperative Extension

The power of a single brand is limited, and the city's cultural brand can be promoted through co-operation with other brands and organisations, such as sponsorship of events and co-operation projects. Xinyang can use the Xinyang city culture brand to combine with other more famous city culture brands, such as the city associated with the city, there are only two cities in China can be called the city of Shen, one is Shanghai, the other is Xinyang. Shanghai is known as 'Shen', which is derived from Chun Shen Jun. Before Shanghai was known as Shen City, Xinyang in Henan Province was also known as Shen City, hundreds of years before Shanghai. Xinyang is the hometown of Chun Shenjun Huang Xie, also known as Shen City. Chunshen Jun, one of the Four Gentlemen of the Warring States, and Shanghai is the fiefdom of Chunshen Jun Huang Xie. The two cities have cultural origins, and there is a kind of affinity, fusion, and symbolic roots called Shencheng. Digging deep into the spiritual core of Chunshen culture and the value of the times, and jointly launching more special cultural tourism routes and attractions, is conducive to creating a strong atmosphere of cultural exchanges between Xinyang and Shanghai, is conducive to building a platform for mutually beneficial and win-win co-operation between the two places, and is conducive to deepening the multi-disciplinary and deep-level co-operation between Xinyang and Shanghai（Xinyang City people's government portal, 2021).

As a famous big city in China, Shanghai has certain advantages in cultural promotion. Therefore, Xinyang City can establish a cultural research exchange and cooperation mechanism with Shanghai, build a win-win cooperation platform, and innovate forms, such as co-organising large-scale thematic cultural and tourism activities, building

brands, strengthening publicity, etc., which will play an important role in enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang City.

f) Educational Training

One of the basic functions of culture is to guide, regulate, inspire, and elevate human behaviour and spirituality to achieve comprehensive human development. Cultural development transforms the inherent requirements of social development into the goals of the public at large through the establishment of common social ideals, making culture a spiritual force that mobilises and organises people to strive for ideals. Xinyang, as the capital of Mao Jian, a livable city, a national civilised city, a national sanitary city, a national garden city, a national forest city, an excellent tourist city in China, a national greening demonstration city, a national ecological demonstration city, and an international garden city, should present its excellent urban image to the public and strengthen cultural education and training. Grassroots organisations, including communities, can organise cultural activities on a regular basis to raise awareness and understanding of Xinyang culture among citizens and tourists. By establishing an open, fair, clean, efficient, pragmatic and innovative government image that serves the people and improving the quality and efficiency of government staff, the quality of Xinyang citizens can be continuously improved, so that citizens will realise that they, as the masters of the city, have the right and obligation to make their own efforts to enhance the cultural brand of Xinyang. In addition, research institutes and universities can play the role of cultural heritage. Creative brand design departments can be set up to give full play to the advantages of talent to provide creative new ideas and strategies for the construction of the city's cultural brand. Of course, basic education should lead by example in the inheritance of city culture, so that primary school students grow up loving their own city, understanding and learning about city culture, to inherit and carry

forward the excellent culture, and ultimately achieve the purpose of enhancing the city's cultural brand.

v. Communication Effect

a) Image-Building

The dissemination of the city's cultural brand is conducive to the shaping of the city's image; it shows the city's unique charm and cultural characteristics, and attracts more people to pay attention to and understand the city. Through the city LOGO with rich cultural connotations and the IP image of Xinyang city, as well as the International Tea Culture Festival, the Nanwan Fishing Festival, the Gourmet Festival, and the Roots Culture Festival held in Xinyang, the Xinyang city culture brand has played a role in promoting the popularity of the Xinyang city culture and the shaping of the city's image.

b) Attract Investment and Talent

The development of city cultural brand has a certain impact on investment and talent. A good city cultural brand can attract investment and talent inflow, and promote the development and prosperity of the city economy. In the development of Xinyang City in recent years, with the cultural characteristics of mountains and rivers, tea and liveable Xinyang, Xinyang has attracted many enterprise investment and high-level talents. In 2023, 34 Suzhou entrepreneurs collectively signed a contract to land in Xinyang Huaibin, with a total investment of 5.506 billion (China Daily Website, 2023).

On 27 September 2023, the second day after the opening of the 11th Central Plains (Gushi) Roots Culture Festival, the 2023 Xinshang Conference and Fujian-Taiwan Entrepreneurs Summit Forum was held in Xinyang. This session signed a total of 30 projects with a total investment of 43.18 billion yuan. Among them, 10 on-site cooperation projects were signed, with a total investment of 33.715 billion yuan. Several leading industrial chain

enterprises settled in Xinyang, 3 projects above 100 million yuan, 5 projects above 1 billion yuan, and 2 projects above 5 billion yuan. In the first eight months of 2023, Xinyang introduced 23.41 billion yuan of capital from outside the province, with the growth rate ranking third in the province; The number of “signed batch” projects in the seventh, eighth and ninth consecutive periods ranks at the forefront of the province. A series of gratifying results are accelerating, and Xinyang’s development stage, development space, and development prospects are huge and broad, and there are unlimited business opportunities (Client reporter of Henan Daily,2023) The number of high-level talents introduced in Xinyang is also increasing year by year. By spreading the city’s cultural brand, it can enhance the city’s visibility and influence, so that more people are willing to invest, visit, study or work in Xinyang, and eventually live or settle in the city.

c) Promote Tourism

The dissemination of the city's cultural brand can attract more tourists to visit the city, promoting the development of tourism and the prosperity of the local economy. With its unique geographical location, beautiful natural scenery and convenient transport conditions, Xinyang City, as the famous capital of Mao Jian and a livable city, enjoys the reputation of Jiangnan North Country, North Country Jiangnan, and is an excellent tourist city in China. There is Ji Gong Mountain, one of the four major summer resorts in China, and Nan Wan Lake, a pearl in the south of Henan, which is 12 times larger than West Lake in Hangzhou. With the characteristics of landscape culture, tea culture, root culture, and food culture, Xinyang attracts a lot of tourists every year to visit, experience, and feel the culture of Xinyang. The tourism industry in Xinyang is also booming.

d) Shaping City Identity

Through the dissemination of the city's cultural brand, it can enhance citizens' sense of identity and pride in the city and promote social cohesion and centripetal force. City culture is the sum of material and spiritual wealth created by city builders. Citizens will be proud of their city culture. A city with unique cultural resources can set up a distinctive cultural brand image to differentiate itself from other cities. Xinyang city has unique cultural resources, including landscape culture, tea culture, red culture, root culture, and food culture. In particular, the spirit of Dabie Mountain in the red culture still carries on the spirit of the old generation of revolutionaries. People in Xinyang are also proud that their city is the hometown of generals. In the process of promoting the modernisation of the city, more people recognise the important role of city culture and city spirit in improving the civilisation of the city and enhancing the centripetal force and cohesion of the city. To summarize, the strategic framework for promoting the creative brand of Xinyang City culture in China can be established as shown in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16： Framework to Propagate Xinyang City Cultural Brand Creative Strategy

Integrated brand communication theory	**Incorporate**
Communication Body	Individual (each citizen) group (party and government organs, social groups, organizations, enterprises, schools, family), tourists and so on.
Content of Communication	City Name
	Cultural Images and Slogans
	Creative story content
Channels of Communication	Media transmission
	Advertising communication
	Exhibition communication

Mode of Propagation	Launch a variety of creative and cultural activities
	The design of the cultural carrier Creative environment design
	The design of the city cultural propaganda film
	Cooperative Extension
	Educational training
Communicating Effect	Image-building
	Attract investment and talent
	Promote tourism
	Shaping city identity

Source: Author collected

4.4.8 Creativity Strategy on Enhancing the Cultural Brand for Xinyang City

Through the preliminary literature research, case study analysis, questionnaire survey, and other methods, it is concluded that the cultural brand of Xinyang City is positioned as “Landscape Tea Capital, Livable Xinyang”. Through the tools and means of city cultural brand construction and communication, the following creative strategies to enhance the cultural brand of Xinyang City.

a. Creating a cultural slogan and image

The cultural resources in Xinyang are vibrant, and its cultural characteristics are relatively prominent and obvious. Through the sorting and refining of Xinyang City's cultural resources, it is found that the culture of Xinyang City primarily focuses on landscape culture, tea culture, red culture, root culture, and food culture, among others. However, the most widely recognized aspects are the famous landscape and tea cultures. Therefore, the city's culture slogan and image should incorporate landscape culture and tea culture as the primary cultural elements. At present, Xinyang does not have a specific city cultural brand

slogan, but only the city brand slogan of “Good Life, Youthful Xinyang”, which does not reflect the cultural characteristics of Xinyang. Therefore, after preliminary research, the researcher positioned the cultural brand slogan of Xinyang as “Landscape Tea Capital, Livable Xinyang. In September 2022, the city LOGO (Figure 4.19) and IP image of Xinyang were officially released. The logo contains the unique regional elements of Xinyang, such as Ji Gong Mountain, Nan Wan Lake, Mao Jian Tea, and so on. It is the most representative business card of Xinyang and a direct reflection of its excellent ecology. The red boat symbolises that under the leadership of the Party, it has led the Chinese nation to cross the first century, move towards the second century, and start a new journey to build socialist modernization in all aspects. The whole logo hue to the old revolutionary red, ecological green, modern grey-based, not only inheritance of history, but also based on the present, looking to the future, reflecting the internal temperament of the revolutionary red city, the external appearance of the ecological green city, and the high-end quality of the new city of the times new town. The city IP image (Figure 4.20) also brings together the elements of Xinyang, highlighting the unique regional characteristics with distinctive colours such as red of the old revolutionary area, ecological green, and tea green. The design of “Mountain Brother Tea Sister” not only shows the Xinyang temperament of the landscape tea city, but also presents the regional characteristics, history and culture, local customs, and spirit of Xinyang to the fullest. Although Xinyang now has its city culture logo and IP image, it has not played its role well, nor has it formed a unified city cultural slogan, standard colour, and standard font, nor corresponding public cultural facilities. Therefore, government departments can try to determine the unified city culture slogan, determine the standard colour and standard font, and can try to use the city LOGO and IP image of Xinyang in the design of bus stops, airports, railway stations, high-speed train stations, highway advertising

boards, and various public facilities in the city. Vigorously promote Xinyang city culture slogan, city logo, and IP image to achieve the purpose of enhancing Xinyang city culture brand.

b. Creating Architectural Design and Iconic structures

Practice has proved that iconic buildings and structures, as landmarks of the city, play an important role in enhancing the city's image. The enhancement of a city's cultural brand is inseparable from the city's unique cultural buildings and structures. Xinyang, as the capital of China's Mao Jian and the only city in China that has been selected as one of China's top ten livable cities for ten consecutive years, does not have particularly clear city landmarks and structures. Therefore, to enhance the cultural branding of Xinyang, China, there is a need for creative cultural landmark building and structure design. The city of Xinyang can try to make use of the elements of Xinyang's landscape culture, tea culture, red culture, and root culture for the creative design of landmark buildings and structures.

c. Event hallmarking

Event hallmarking is also often used as an important tool for city culture branding, for example, through the organisation of cultural festivals or large-scale events. City cultural events, festivals, and various large-scale activities are indispensable for the promotion of city cultural branding. As the economy develops and people's living standards improve, cultural and leisure activities are increasingly becoming an important part of people's lives. Many cities are working hard to try to make themselves popular destinations for tourists. Xinyang can improve its city culture brand by expanding the scale of the long-running International Tea Culture Festival, enriching the content of the event to attract more citizens and domestic and foreign tourists to participate in it, or it

can make use of the celebrity effect as well as a variety of publicity methods to increase the popularity and reputation of the Tea Culture Festival. In addition to the famous Xinyang Tea Culture Festival, Xinyang can also hold a variety of other cultural activities or festivals to celebrate, such as the opening of the fishing festival, food festival, fitness cycling activities held in the famous Nan Wan Lake, in Ji Gong Mountain, Zhen Lei Mountain and other famous attractions to hold a mountaineering festival, held the Roots Cultural Festival, as well as a variety of other forms of art festivals, music festivals and so on, of course, with the improvement of the image and popularity of the Xinyang City , Xinyang can apply to become a host city for holding large-scale events and activities at home and abroad, thus expanding the popularity of Xinyang City and creating a local and international identity. Various cultural activities, festivals and large-scale events can not only attract tourists, but also attract investment, improve the local image, support the development of the local community, create more employment opportunities for the local tourism and cultural industries, and enhance the local economy. What's more, they can add a sense of life to the city and give citizens a sense of pride and belonging to their hometown. By organising a rich variety of activities, Xinyang can greatly enhance the popularity of the cultural brand.

d. Invest in cultural flagship projects

The cultural and creative industry has become a popular sunrise industry with great potential for development. The cultural industry of Xinyang City is not rich enough. At present, only the tea culture industry is more famous, and many other cultural resources have failed to form an industrial chain. Therefore, the city can explore city cultural resources. For example, shadow play in Luo Shan (A county town of Xinyang City), Flower drum play in Guang Shan(A county town of Xinyang City), Xinyang folk songs, Xinyang paper-cut, clay

sculpture in Huai Bin(A county town of Xinyang City), embroidery in Xin Xian(A county town of Xinyang City), leaf carving in Shang Cheng(A county town of Xinyang City), there are also historical and cultural stories and legends that are excellent cultural resources. Xinyang City can invest in cultural flagship projects through the following measures. First, a cultural and creative industrial park will be built in Xinyang to provide venues and infrastructural support, attract cultural and creative enterprises and projects to move in. Set up a creative department to invest in creativity, gather resources and talents, promote the development of cultural and creative industries, facilitate the implementation of cultural flagship projects and create cultural flagship projects with local characteristics. Showcase and promote local culture in Xinyang and attract the attention of tourists and investors. Second, promote cross-border and cross-city cooperation between Xinyang's cultural flagship projects and other industries, such as cooperation with tourism, catering, fashion and other industries, and cooperation with Shanghai, China’s another city which called Shen Cheng. Through cross-border and cross-city co-operation, resources can be shared and complemented to enhance the popularity and market competitiveness of the project. Third, vigorously carry out Xinyang intangible cultural heritage-related education and training activities and scientific research, encourage active public participation, organise cultural activities and participate in exhibitions, expand the scope of publicity and audience of the project, and provide talent support and market demand for the flagship project of Xinyang culture by cultivating talents and improving cultural literacy. Fourth, digital technology and Internet platforms will be used to promote digital transformation and innovation of Xinyang's cultural resources. Art exhibitions and online concerts can be presented through virtual reality technology to expand the project's audience and market reach. Finally, it will actively engage in international exchanges and co-operation to introduce internationally

advanced cultural flagship projects and resources. Through international co-operation, the international level and competitiveness of the project can be improved and the international market for the project can be expanded and then ultimately enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang city.

e. Brand utilization of public cultural places

The public cultural places of a city can highlight the cultural characteristics of the city and publicize its cultural heritage. However, there are not many public cultural venues in Xinyang, and their visibility and utilisation are not high enough to enhance the city's cultural brand. It is necessary to enhance the cultural brand of Xinyang through the brand utilisation strategy of public cultural venues. First, the design of public cultural venues should enhance the cultural connotation; for example, the architectural design of Xinyang Museum, library, and art gallery should highlight the local cultural characteristics of Xinyang as much as possible. The current buildings are relatively ordinary modern buildings, which cannot impress local citizens and tourists, and cannot be used as a carrier for spreading Xinyang culture. The second is to add more public cultural spaces that can carry and publicise the culture of Xinyang, such as city studies, special homestays, cultural plazas, cultural parks, and other public cultural venues and facilities, to give citizens and tourists more opportunities to encounter, learn about, and publicise Xinyang's excellent culture. In response to building a city of books and promoting reading for all, Xinyang has added several city study projects, the most representative of which is the “two better” theme city study in Yangshan New District. From indoor furnishings to activities, the City Study projects are trying to highlight the cultural characteristics of Xinyang and pass on the excellent culture of Xinyang. However, the publicity of the activities was limited, and the number of participants was limited. The city study projects need to be further innovated to attract more

residents and tourists to visit and learn from the city. Finally, the design of the city's public infrastructure should also highlight the characteristics of Xinyang's culture as much as possible. Stations, airports and ports with high passenger traffic can be set up with some prominent Xinyang city slogan, LOGO and IP image, as well as the use of standard city colours, standard fonts and other elements, to fully reflect the cultural connotation of Xinyang, so that tourists coming to Xinyang for the first time will have a deep impression for Xinyang's culture. The unique cultural image can arouse people to miss Xinyang and have the desire to visit again, so that local people in Xinyang can have a sense of city pride and belonging.

f. Use historical and cultural celebrities and stories in marketing

Stories are crucial to creating a positive image of a destination and can influence a visitor's decision to visit（Richards & Wilson，2007）. Xinyang has many historical and cultural celebrities and stories, which can be tapped and utilised to enhance the city's cultural brand. First, Xinyang is a city of heroes, a red city. During the Warring States period, Xinyang was once the land of Chu, and one of the four princes of the Warring States period, Chun Shen Jun, was born in Xinyang, and he is now known as the originator of humanities in places such as Shanghai and Suzhou. There is a total of two cities in China called Shencheng, one is Shanghai and the other is Xinyang, because Xinyang is the hometown of Lord Chunshen and Shanghai is his fiefdom, so both cities are related to him. In addition, the land of Xinyang has nurtured many celebrities: Sun Shu Ao, a famous prime minister, Chun Shen Jun, one of the four princes of the Warring States period, Wei Yan, a famous general of the Three Kingdoms, Chen Yuanguang, the Saint King of Kai Zhang, a great historian Sima Guang, Ma Zuchang, a Confucian scholar from the Central Plains, He Jingming, a leader in the literary world, Wu Qijun, a botanist, the legendary admiral Xu

Shiyou, and Li Dexiang, vice-chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and many other famous people were all born in Xinyang. Historical stories of Xinyang include the famous story of Sima Guang smashing the cylinder and the legend of mending the jail after a sheep is lost(Xinyang Live，2018), all of which are learnt in the textbooks of Chinese primary school students and can teach people a lot of wisdom and truth. Xinyang can promote these historical and cultural celebrities and stories by establishing historical celebrity memorials and cultural halls, celebrity sculptures, celebrity story cultural gardens, cultural squares, etc., as well as by writing historical celebrities and stories into textbooks, etc., to promote the culture of Xinyang and enhance the cultural brand of Xinyang. In summary, the researcher drew a figure showing the Creativity strategy on Enhancing the Cultural Brand through the overall research process and results, as shown in Figure 4.24.

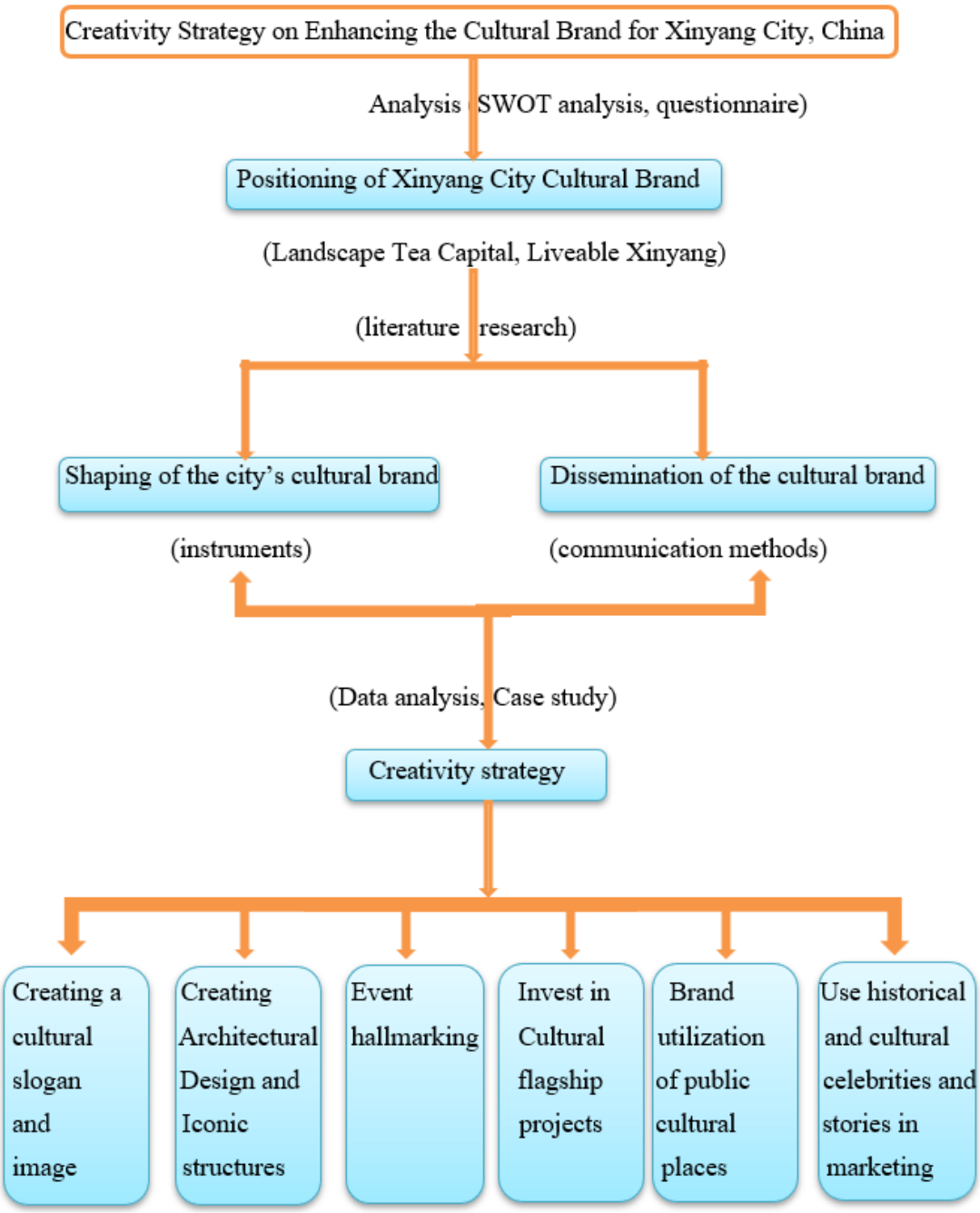


Figure 4.24： Creativity strategy on Enhancing the Cultural Brand

(Source: Author designed)

4.4.9 Summary

In summary, through the analysis and summary of some Chinese and foreign cities' cultural brand building strategies, the existing research strategies of Xinyang city cultural brand building, the researcher's exploration of Xinyang city cultural brand building strategies,

and the attitude and understanding of Xinyang residents towards Xinyang city cultural brand building, the use of city branding tools, combined with the theory of urban marketing and integrated brand communication theory. Creative strategies to enhance Xinyang's cultural brand were derived: a). Creating a cultural slogan and image, b). Creating a cultural slogan and image, c). Event hallmarking, d). Invest in cultural flagship projects, e). Brand utilization of public cultural places, f). Use historical and cultural celebrities and stories in marketing.

By proposing suggestions and measures to enhance the city's cultural brand of Xinyang, the creative strategy framework for enhancing the city's cultural brand of Xinyang is finally summarised. It is hoped that it can provide meaningful reference value for the sustainable development of Xinyang city's cultural brand.

4.5 Summary of Chapter

This chapter addresses the three research questions mainly by analysing and discussing relevant research data.

By analysing and mutually verifying the collected information and data related to Xinyang's cultural branding, this researcher finds that although Xinyang's cultural resources are very rich, the status of the city's cultural branding is not satisfactory. The conclusion is that the positioning of the Xinyang cultural brand is not clear enough, people are not familiar enough with the Xinyang cultural brand, and the Xinyang cultural brand is not well-known at home and abroad. This fulfils the first research objective.

Through the corresponding study of Xinyang city’s cultural resources, it was found that Xinyang has rich and diverse cultural resources, the most representative of which is the tea culture. In a survey of cultural landmarks and tourist attractions that can represent Xinyang city and would most likely be recommended to tourists, it was found that Xinyang’s

tea culture-related bases and natural attractions (Ji Gong Mountain and Nan Wan Lake) are most likely to be recommended. Therefore, Xinyang cultural brand positioning can be constructed in terms of both tea culture and landscape culture, and we can position it as a landscape tea capital and a livable Xinyang. The study found that Xinyang city cultural tourism products are quite scarce, Xinyang relevant departments and designers need to transform Xinyang cultural resources into tourism and cultural creative products, promote Xinyang special culture, and enhance the influence of Xinyang culture. Finally, in terms of city cultural activities, it is necessary to enhance the popularity and overall image of Xinyang cultural brand by carrying out more diversified and creative cultural activities, increasing the publicity of the activities, expanding the scope of the participants, effectively organising and servicing the participants, and innovating the cultural activities.

Finally, based on case studies of urban cultural branding and communication, effective strategies for enhancing urban cultural brands are summarised, and creative strategies for enhancing the cultural brand of Xinyang are broadly summarised by combining the research results of Xinyang's cultural branding and the actual situation of Xinyang's urban development. These creative strategies address the third objective of the study by pointing out what Xinyang city stakeholders should do and how they should do it in enhancing the city's cultural branding. At this point, this chapter completes the main content and core tasks of this study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study focuses on the construction and development of Xinyang City's cultural brand in China, and proposes creativity strategies to enhance its cultural brand awareness. The main contents of this chapter are (i) research abstract; (ii) Achieving the research objectives; (iii) Recommendations for further study.

5.1 Summary of the Research

This study mainly starts with the related concepts of city cultural brand, such as brand, city brand, culture, city culture, city image, city cultural brand, etc., and studies the relationship between city brand and city image, the conceptual framework of city cultural brand, the positioning of city cultural brand, the principles, paths and tools of city cultural brand shaping, etc. It also collects many excellent cases of city cultural brand construction, summarizes some relevant strategies of city cultural brand construction, and focuses on the city cultural brand construction of Xinyang City, the only city in China that has been selected as one of the top ten livable cities in China for ten consecutive years and the capital of Mao Jian, as the research content. Through literature research, field investigation, case analysis, questionnaire survey, and other research methods, Xinyang City's cultural resources were investigated and analyzed. Finally, Xinyang City's cultural brand was positioned as "Landscape tea capital, livable Xinyang", and creative strategies for promoting Xinyang City's cultural brand were summarized from the aspects of shaping and communication of Xinyang City's cultural brand. The results of this study have made a new contribution to the research field of city cultural brand. In this study, researchers adopted a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. This comprehensive research method has

rarely been used in the research of Xinyang City's cultural brand. These specific research methods include the literature research method, field study method, questionnaire survey method, case analysis method, comparative method, and qualitative analysis method. According to the strengths of different research techniques, researchers adopt corresponding methods to achieve the purpose of different stages of research.

This research takes the urban cultural brand of Xinyang as the research object, integrating urban brand marketing theory and integrated brand communication theory. It proposes innovative strategies for the construction of cultural brands in small and medium-sized cities. It makes the following contributions to the relevant academic fields and practical applications:

a. At the theoretical level: Expanding the dimensions of urban cultural brand research

Expanding the theoretical framework of cultural brands in small and medium-sized cities: Existing studies mostly focus on first-tier cities or historical and cultural cities. This research, targeting cities like Xinyang with "atypical" cultural resources, proposes a model of "cultural symbol exploration - brand narrative construction - multi-dimensional dissemination activation", enriching the applicable scenarios of urban brand theory.

Integrating cultural brand and brand communication theories: By analyzing cultural resources such as tea culture, red culture, and folk customs in Xinyang, the abstract "local knowledge" is transformed into communicable brand elements, providing methodological support for the practical application of cultural symbols.

b. Methodological Level: Propose the "Localization + Digitalization" dual-track strategy

Localization creative strategy: Propose specific paths such as "Cultural IP incubation" and "Creative space design", emphasizing the extraction of differentiated symbols from local culture (such as the intangible cultural heritage craftsmanship of Xinyang Maojian tea and the ecological landscape of Nangwan Lake in Jikong Mountain), avoiding homogeneous brand building.

Digital communication innovation: By integrating new media technologies such as short videos, a "culture + technology" communication matrix is constructed, providing case references for small and medium-sized cities to break through geographical limitations and attract young people.

c. Practical aspect: Provide replicable experiences for regional development

Policy suggestion: Propose a "government - enterprise - public" collaborative brand co-construction mechanism, such as establishing a cultural brand special fund, encouraging folk artisans to participate in IP development, which has reference significance for the policy-making of similar cities.

Industrial linkage model: Explore the integrated development model of "cultural brand + rural tourism + characteristic agriculture" (such as the tea tourism and culture integration project), and verify the stimulating effect of cultural brands on the regional economy.

d. Interdisciplinary Value: Connecting Cultural Studies, Communication Studies, and Regional Economics

Through empirical analysis of the Xinyang case, it reveals the correlation between cultural brand building and urban competitiveness, as well as local identity, providing new

data support for interdisciplinary research (such as cultural geography, consumer behavior studies).

This research not only fills the gap in the theoretical framework of cultural brands in medium-sized and small cities but also, through the design of practical strategies, provides a theoretical basis and a practical template for the enhancement of cultural soft power in similar cities, promoting the two-way interaction between academic research and local development.

5.2 Achieving the Research Objectives

The research objectives were successfully achieved in the following ways:

5.2.1 First Objective

It determines the status quo of the construction and development of the city's cultural brand in Xinyang City, China. The original contribution of this study to knowledge is that through SWOT analysis of Xinyang City culture, Xinyang City has a unique geographical location and beautiful natural environment, as well as advantages and opportunities, to build a unique city cultural brand. Using a variety of methods to understand that the positioning of Xinyang city culture brand is not clear, the city culture brand is not well known at home or abroad, and most people are not familiar with the Xinyang city culture brand. This provides a strong impetus for the promotion of creative strategy research on the Xinyang city culture brand.

5.2.2 Second Objective

Analyze Xinyang’s unique cultural resources and accurately position Xinyang's cultural brand. Through a variety of research methods, we finally found that the positioning of the Xinyang culture brand is mainly based on landscape culture and tea culture. We can

position the cultural brand of Xinyang as “landscape tea capital, livable Xinyang”. So far, no one has conducted such detailed and in-depth research on Xinyang cultural branding. There is no research framework for the creative strategy of Xinyang cultural brand enhancement. The results of the study provide some theoretical basis and practical guidance for Xinyang City's cultural branding.

In addition, this study found in the survey that although Xinyang is rich in cultural resources, there are very few unique and creative city cultural tourism products, and people do not seem to be familiar with particularly famous cultural and creative products, except for agricultural products and tea. There are also very few cities' public facilities with Xinyang's regional cultural characteristics, which provide opportunities and challenges for the next step in building Xinyang's cultural brand.

Finally, this study also found that, apart from the influential Xinyang International Tea Culture Festival, other cultural activities in Xinyang City are not colourful enough and have too little influence, resulting in insufficient promotion of the city's cultural brand and a lack of creativity. These limitations can be achieved by using Xinyang's unique cultural resources for creative innovation, such as transforming rich city cultural resources into cultural and creative products with regional cultural characteristics, using city cultural resources to design city public facilities, and carrying out rich and varied city cultural activities, to better play the role of city cultural resources. Enhance Xinyang cultural brand awareness and city image.

5.2.3 Third Objective

In the process of researching creative strategies to enhance the cultural brand building of Xinyang, China, the researcher found that there are various means and paths of city cultural brand building as well as various ways and methods of city cultural brand

dissemination, and that a variety of innovative strategies can be attempted. This study combines the actual situation of Xinyang cultural brand building with the study and summarises the relevant strategies of domestic and foreign predecessors on city cultural brand building. Finally, it puts forward creative strategies to enhance the city cultural brand construction of Xinyang, providing a direction for the sustainable development of Xinyang cultural brand, which has certain theoretical guiding significance and practical value.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

i. Based on the systematic study of city cultural brand, the researcher has established the creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang city in China, based on the advanced experience of excellent city cultural brand construction at home and abroad, and combined with the actual situation of Xinyang city's cultural brand. But the research just studied one city in central China, and the creativity strategy may not be comprehensive or deep enough. Therefore, the research can be horizontally extended to the research on the cultural brand construction of other countries or cities, and the related strategies on enhancing the city's cultural brand can also be further studied.

ii. This research subject is a multidisciplinary study, which can be carried out from the aspects of art, communication, history, and other disciplines. For example, city planning and design, architectural design, cultural product design, and other aspects of art design can be further studied to have a more detailed understanding of the research on the promotion of creative strategies of city cultural brands.

iii. This study includes a variety of stakeholders, including government departments, enterprises, social organizations, associations, schools, families, and even every city resident, who can make due efforts to enhance the city's cultural brand. Therefore, research on city renewal policies and various creative cultural activities can be carried out.

iv. The biggest beneficiaries of this study are Xinyang city residents. Through the research on the promotion of Xinyang City cultural brand creative strategy, the awareness of Xinyang City cultural brand can be increased, the brand image of Xinyang city can be established, the development of local tourism can be promoted, and the income of local people can be increased. Therefore, the research can be more detailed and deepened, such as improving the construction of city public infrastructure and increasing the number of city cultural activity places. We will improve the efficiency of government work, improve the quality of city people, and make more concrete efforts to enhance the happiness and sense of belonging of city residents.

v. The main object of this study is Xinyang City's cultural brand, to enhance its popularity and influence. Therefore, the next step can highlight the ability of scientific research institutes and universities to cultivate creative talents. For example, it can develop courses inside and outside the school, and carry out creative design of brand logos, slogans, cultural products, and city cultural facilities. Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors can also be invited to expand the workshop to develop creative and innovative designs by tapping city cultural resources and the potential value of intangible cultural heritage, and to enrich people's lives through cultural inheritance, thus improving and enriching the research content.

vi. Xinyang Museum, library, art gallery and other cultural venues can provide some information on city cultural resources to enrich the study of Xinyang culture brand.

5.4 Conclusion of the Study

By combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, this paper studies the creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang City in China, and we can conclude that the creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang City in

China are very rich， Combined with the previous summary of the excellent city cultural brand construction strategy and the actual situation of Xinyang city cultural brand construction, the researcher put forward some creativity strategy on enhancing the cultural brand for Xinyang City, China. The results of this study are expected to benefit multiple stakeholders involved in tourism management, policy development and destination marketing. It provides beneficial enlightenment for the construction of Xinyang cultural brand in China and the construction and sustainable development of other city cultural brands at home and abroad.

In conclusion, as a medium-sized city in central China, due to its unique geographical location and beautiful natural environment, rich humanistic resources, as well as being the famous Mao Jian capital and livable city in China, Xinyang cultural branding has a great potential for development, and it is of great practical significance to carry out the research related to the enhancement of the cultural branding of Xinyang.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Journal Publications

Zhang, W., & Lamat, M. b. (2024). Research on Park Landscape Design Strategy Based on Urban Cultural Brand -- A Case Study of Xinyang City. Journal of Ecohumanism, 3(7), 1759–1770. https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i7.4334

Zhang, W., & b. Lamat, M. (2025). Digital media-enhanced cultural brand development: creative strategies for urban identity construction. *Future Technology*, *4*(4), 72–84. Retrieved from https://fupubco.com/futech/article/view/472

ARCHITECTURE IMAGE STUDIES E-ISSN:2184-8645

Date: 01 September, 2025

To

Wei Zhang
Mastika b. Lamat

Subject: "[The Cultural Brand Strategy of Xinyang, China, from the Perspective of an International Garden City: Opportunities and Challenges]"

We are pleased to inform you that your manuscript titled "*The Cultural Brand Strategy of Xinyang, China, from the Perspective of an International Garden City: Opportunities and Challenges"* Paper ID: AIS-025-174 has been accepted for publication in the journal of Architecture Image Studies.

Your article underwent extensive peer review, and the reviewers and editorial board determined it to be of high quality and relevant to our readership. We feel that your study will make an important addition to the discipline.

Architecture Image Studies (AIS) is abstracted and indexed in:

- Scopus indexed
- EBSCO - Art & Architecture
- Directory of Open Access Journals
- BASE - Bielefeld University Library

Congratulations again on the acceptance of your paper. We look forward to having your work published in our publication and continuing to contribute to the academic community.

Thank you for selecting the Architecture Image Studies as the forum for publishing your research findings.

Regards,

Lara Ross
Architectural Image Studies, 2184-8645
https://journals.ap2.pt/index.php/ais
https://www.scopus.com/sourceid/21101247624



ICACA 2024

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF APPLIED & CREATIVE ARTS

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Wei Zhang

Paper Title:
Study on the Function and Strategy of Public Facilities Design in the Construction of Xinyang City Cultural Brand

as presenter in
THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF APPLIED AND CREATIVE ARTS
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at
BORNEO CULTURES MUSEUM
KUCHING, SARAWAK,
MALAYSIA.

Dr. Muhammad Jameel Mohamed Kamil
Conference Chairperson

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Study on the function and strategy of public facilities design in the construction of Xinyang City cultural brand

Zhang Wei
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Abstract : As an important part of the city, public facilities symbolize the city's image and a good carrier of regional culture. Excellent public facility design plays an important role in the construction of city cultural brands, which can highlight the city's cultural identity and enhance the recognition of cultural brands by shaping the image. However, as an important cultural city, the design of public facilities in Xinyang City fails to highlight the characteristics of the city's cultural brands. Therefore, this study aims to explain the role of city public facilities in the construction of city cultural brands, introduce excellent design practice cases, and then analyze the design status quo of Xinyang city public facilities, to provide targeted strategies and suggestions for the design of Xinyang city public facilities, and finally promote the sustainable development and the promotion of the cultural brand for Xinyang city.

Keywords: Cultural brand, Public facilities design, Strategy, Xinyang city.

1

Future Publishing LLC

Advancing Knowledge Together

To
Wei Zhang, Mastika b. Lamat

Date: 07/29/2025

We are pleased to inform you that your paper, "Digital Media-Enhanced Cultural Brand Development Creative Strategies for Urban Identity Construction" has been accepted for publication in the Future Technology Journal pending minor revisions.
Before we send the reviewer comments and issue the final acceptance, we kindly request that you complete the Article Processing Charge (APC) payment of $1000 to the Future Publishing LLC account.
The payment can be made via Future Publishing LLC's **PayPal link** as follows:

Payment Method	**Details**
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Payment Due Date: 05 August 2025
Once the payment is received, we will send the minor revision comments and proceed with the final acceptance process.
Should you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

Best Regards

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2025 4th International Conference on Art Design and Digital Technology(ADDT 2025)

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Acceptance Letter

Dear Author(s):

Congratulations! Your manuscript has passed the peer review (the reviewers' comments are available in the attached file on AIS) and has been accepted by the 2025 4th International Conference on Art Design and Digital Technology(ADDT 2025). The conference will be held in Zheng zhou • China from 06/13/2025 - 06/15/2025. We are glad to invite you to attend the conference and make an oral report.

Manuscript No.: 6RUMF3GFFI

Author name(s): Wei Zhang

Manuscript title: City Study Helps City Cultural Brand Construction - Take Xinyang 'Two Better' City Study as an Example

Your manuscript, after presented in the oral report or poster in the conference, will be published on Conference proceedings, after which it will be submitted for index in EI Compendex, Scopus.

2025 4th International Conference on Art Design and Digital Technology (ADDT 2025)

01-27-2025

Notices:

1. Authors need to revise the manuscript as per the reviewers' comments before re-uploading the final version (in Word or PDF) to the AIS system.
2. Authors need to ensure that the submitted manuscript is an original paper with a similarity lower than 20%. Once the manuscript is submitted to AIS, the authors are not allowed to re-submit it to other journals for publication.
3. Authors need to confirm their attendance one week before the conference is held. If the authors are not able to be present on the conference after agreeing to attend the conference, the authors need to reach the conference secretary for re-arrangement.

Again, congratulations and we look forward to meeting you in Zhengzhou • China

Appendix B: questionnaire

Xinyang city cultural brand construction questionnaire

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in the questionnaire survey. Our goal is to promote Xinyang City cultural brand. Your opinion is very important to the development of Xinyang. The questionnaire is anonymous and does not involve privacy. The data is only used for scientific research and will not have any impact on you. The answers are no right or wrong. Please make a true and objective choice according to your own situation.

1. Gender

○Male

○Female

2. Age

○18-25 years old

○26-35 years old

○36-45 years old

○46-55 years old

○Over 55 years old

3. Educational level

○Junior high school and below

○High school/secondary school/vocational high school

○Bachelor/College

○Master's degree or above

4. The length of your stay in Xinyang

○Less than 5 years

○5- 10 years

○More than 10 years

5. Your understanding of Xinyang City cultural brand [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Very familiar with Xinyang City cultural brand	○	○	○	○	○
Very concerned	○	○	○	○	○

about Xinyang City cultural brand construction					
Xinyang culture brand positioning is very clear	○	○	○	○	○
Xinyang cultural brand is well known at home and abroad	○	○	○	○	○

6. What do you think best represents Xinyang's characteristic culture [Matrix Scale Question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Tea culture	○	○	○	○	○
Landscape culture	○	○	○	○	○

Red culture	○	○	○	○	○
Root culture	○	○	○	○	○
Food culture	○	○	○	○	○
Dialect culture	○	○	○	○	○

7. What do you think can represent the cultural landmark of Xinyang[Matrix Scale Question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Jigong mountain	○	○	○	○	○
Nanwan lake	○	○	○	○	○
Garden of flowers	○	○	○	○	○
Mingyang Pavilion	○	○	○	○	○
Pipa stage	○	○	○	○	○
Henan, Anhui Revolutionary Memorial Hall	○	○	○	○	○

Xinyang Museum	○	○	○	○	○
Shihe Park	○	○	○	○	○
Small South Gate food street	○	○	○	○	○

8. When you recommend Xinyang City cultural tourism to others, the preferred destination is [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Historical cultural heritage sites	○	○	○	○	○
Natural cultural attractions	○	○	○	○	○
Red culture education base	○	○	○	○	○
Library, museum, art gallery,	○	○	○	○	○

planning hall, etc					
"Two Better" City Study	○	○	○	○	○
Tea culture-related base	○	○	○	○	○
Creative gourmet restaurant in a commercial pedestrian neighborhood	○	○	○	○	○

9. You know Xinyang has the following city cultural tourism products [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Time-honored traditional	○	○	○	○	○

handicrafts					
Modern exquisite hand gifts (tea and other special products)	○	○	○	○	○
Scenic spot souvenir	○	○	○	○	○
Characteristic cultural clothing, accessories	○	○	○	○	○
Creative food and drinks	○	○	○	○	○
New cultural and creative products	○	○	○	○	○

10. You are more familiar with the following city cultural activities in Xinyang [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Tea culture festival	○	○	○	○	○
South Bay Lake Fishing Festival, food festival	○	○	○	○	○
Cultural events and music festivals	○	○	○	○	○
The Root Pro Cultural Festival	○	○	○	○	○
Bookish reading activities	○	○	○	○	○
Culture and art exhibition	○	○	○	○	○

, creative market					
Intangible cultural heritage handicraft experienc e activity	○	○	○	○	○
Cycling marathon and other sports and fitness activities	○	○	○	○	○

11. In your opinion, Xinyang should strengthen the construction of cultural brand in the following aspects [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Cultural product quality	○	○	○	○	○
Constructi on of cultural facilities	○	○	○	○	○

Cultural events and festivals	○	○	○	○	○
Intensity of cultural publicity	○	○	○	○	○

12. The advantages of Xinyang City cultural brand construction [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Unique geographical location and natural resources	○	○	○	○	○
Rich historical cultural heritage	○	○	○	○	○
Diverse cultural activitie festivals	○	○	○	○	○

Strong policy support	○	○	○	○	○

13. Shortcomings of Xinyang City cultural brand construction [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Lack of name recognition and exposure	○	○	○	○	○
Lack of innovation and differentiation	○	○	○	○	○
Lack of professional and effective brand marketing strategy	○	○	○	○	○
lack of capital	○	○	○	○	○

14. In your opinion, the innovation strategy to promote Xinyang City cultural brand should focus on the following aspects [Matrix scale question] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Highlight the cultural landmark design, and further clarify the Xinyang city cultural brand positioning	○	○	○	○	○
More distinctive and innovative cultural events will be launched	○	○	○	○	○
Explore and protect	○	○	○	○	○

cultural heritage and traditions, and strengthen research and developme nt and design of cultural and creative products					
Provide more tourist routes and attractions, improve the quality of public facilities and landscape design	○	○	○	○	○
Establish an image of an	○	○	○	○	○

open, fair, clean, efficient, pragmatic, and innovative governme nt for the people					
strengthen communit y cultural activities	○	○	○	○	○
Improve the moral quality and accomplis hment of the Xinyang people	○	○	○	○	○
We will give play to the role of scientific research institutes and	○	○	○	○	○

universities in inheriting culture					
Launch story marketing and brand inheritance, and innovate the methods and approaches of urban cultural brand promotion	○	○	○	○	○
Strengthen the development of cultural industries and integration of science and	○	○	○	○	○

technology					
Strengthen cooperation and exchanges with other cities	○	○	○	○	○
To enhance public awareness of broad participation	○	○	○	○	○

15. You often learn about urban culture through the following platforms [Matrix scale] *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	General	Agree	Strongly agree
Traditional media (TV, books, newspapers, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○

New media platform (wechat, Weibo XiaoHongshu, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
New media short video platform (Douyin, Kuaishou, B station, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
Online travel platforms (Ctrip, Qunar, Tuniu, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
Official city tourism website	○	○	○	○	○
Local life apps	○	○	○	○	○

(Meituan, Dianping, etc.)					

信阳城市文化品牌建设调查问卷

感谢您在百忙之中抽出时间参与问卷调查，我们的目标是提升信阳城市文化品牌。您的意见对信阳的发展非常重要。该问卷不记名，不涉及隐私，数据仅用于科研，不会对您造成任何影响，请根据自己的情况做出真实、客观的选择，答案没有对错之分，感谢您的参与。

1. 性别 [单选题] *

○男

○女

2. 年龄 [单选题] *

○18—25 岁

○26—35 岁

○36—45 岁

○46—55 岁

○55 岁以上

3. 教育水平 [单选题] *

○初中及以下

○高中/中专

○本科/专科

○硕士研究生及以上

4. 您在信阳的居住时长 [单选题] *

○5 年以下

○5-10 年

○10 年以上

5.您对信阳城市文化品牌的认识[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同

非常了解信阳城市文化品牌	○	○	○	○	○
非常关心信阳城市文化品牌建设	○	○	○	○	○
信阳文化品牌定位非常明确	○	○	○	○	○
信阳文化品牌在国内国际知名度很高	○	○	○	○	○

6. 您认为最能代表信阳特色文化的[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同
茶文化	○	○	○	○	○
山水文化	○	○	○	○	○
红色文化	○	○	○	○	○
根亲文化	○	○	○	○	○
美食文化	○	○	○	○	○

方言文化	○	○	○	○	○

7. 您认为可以代表信阳文化地标的[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同
鸡公山	○	○	○	○	○
南湾湖	○	○	○	○	○
百花园	○	○	○	○	○
茗阳阁	○	○	○	○	○
琵琶台	○	○	○	○	○
鄂豫皖革命纪念馆	○	○	○	○	○
信阳博物馆	○	○	○	○	○
浉河公园	○	○	○	○	○
小南门美食街	○	○	○	○	○

8. 您向他人推荐信阳城市文化旅游，比较倾向的目的地是[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同

历史文化遗产景点	○	○	○	○	○
自然文化景点	○	○	○	○	○
红色文化教育基地	○	○	○	○	○
图书馆、博物馆、艺术馆等	○	○	○	○	○
“两个更好”城市书房	○	○	○	○	○
茶文化相关基地	○	○	○	○	○
商业步行街区创意餐厅	○	○	○	○	○

9. 您知道信阳有以下城市文化旅游产品[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同

老字号传统手工艺品	○	○	○	○	○
现代精致伴手礼	○	○	○	○	○
景点纪念品	○	○	○	○	○
特色文化服饰、配饰	○	○	○	○	○
创意食品、饮品	○	○	○	○	○
新文创产品	○	○	○	○	○

10. 您比较熟悉信阳有以下城市文化活动[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同
茶文化节	○	○	○	○	○
南湾湖开渔节、美食节	○	○	○	○	○

文化赛事音乐节	○	○	○	○	○
根亲文化节	○	○	○	○	○
书香阅读活动	○	○	○	○	○
文化艺术展览、创意市集	○	○	○	○	○
非遗手工体验活动	○	○	○	○	○
骑行马拉松等体育活动	○	○	○	○	○

11. 您认为信阳市应该在以下方面加强文化品牌建设[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同
文化产品质量	○	○	○	○	○
文化设施建设	○	○	○	○	○

文化活动和节日	○	○	○	○	○
文化宣传力度	○	○	○	○	○

12. 信阳城市文化品牌建设的优势[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同
独特的地理位置和自然资源	○	○	○	○	○
丰富的历史和文化遗产	○	○	○	○	○
多样化的文化活动和节庆	○	○	○	○	○
强有力的政策支持	○	○	○	○	○

13. 信阳城市文化品牌建设的不足之处[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同

缺乏知名度和曝光度	○	○	○	○	○
缺乏创新和差异化	○	○	○	○	○
缺乏专业有效的品牌营销策略	○	○	○	○	○
缺乏资金	○	○	○	○	○

14. 您认为提升信阳城市文化品牌的创新策略应注重从以下方面着手[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同
突出文化地标设计	○	○	○	○	○
推出更具特色和创新的文化活动节	○	○	○	○	○
发掘和保文化遗产和传统	○	○	○	○	○

加强文化创意产品的研发和设计	○	○	○	○	○
提供更多文旅线路和景点	○	○	○	○	○
提升公共设施和景观设计的品质	○	○	○	○	○
树立公开公正、廉洁高效、务实创新为民的政府形象	○	○	○	○	○
加强社区文化活动开展力度	○	○	○	○	○
提高信阳人的道德素质与素养	○	○	○	○	○

发挥科研院所和高校传承文化的作用	○	○	○	○	○
推出故事营销和品牌传承	○	○	○	○	○
加强文化产业发展和科技融合	○	○	○	○	○
加强与其他城市的合作交流	○	○	○	○	○
创新城市文化品牌宣传推广的方法途径	○	○	○	○	○
提高市民的广泛参与意识	○	○	○	○	○
更进一步明确信阳	○	○	○	○	○

城市文化品牌定位					

15. 您经常通过以下平台来了解城市文化的[矩阵量表题] *

	非常不赞同	不赞同	一般	赞同	非常赞同
传统媒体（电视、书报等）	○	○	○	○	○
新媒体平台（微信、微博小红书等）	○	○	○	○	○
新媒体短视频平台（抖音、快手、B站等）	○	○	○	○	○
在线旅游平台（携程、去哪儿、途牛等）	○	○	○	○	○

城市官方旅游网站	○	○	○	○	○
本地生活APP（美团、大众点评等）	○	○	○	○	○