

Research on Brand Construction of Rural Tourism in the New Era

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Abstract

With the issuance of the "Opinions on Learning and Applying the Experience from the 'Thousand Villages Demonstration, Ten Thousand Villages Rehabilitation' Project to Effectively Promote Comprehensive Rural Revitalization" by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, rural tourism, as an essential part of comprehensive rural revitalization, faces unprecedented development opportunities. This study explores the brand construction of rural tourism under the new era context, aiming to analyze how the spirit of the "Thousand Villages Demonstration, Ten Thousand Villages Rehabilitation" project can guide and inspire the brand building of rural tourism. Through an in-depth analysis of the new era's policy environment, this paper reveals the current situation and trends of rural tourism development, emphasizing the core role of brand construction in enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of rural tourism. The research identifies brand positioning, brand communication, brand experience, and brand cooperation as key strategies for rural tourism brand construction. Facing the challenges in brand building, this paper proposes targeted measures and suggestions, including strengthening policy support, financial investment, and talent development, to provide robust support for the brand construction of rural tourism. This study aims to offer theoretical and practical guidance for the brand building of rural tourism in the new era, promote the sustainable development of rural tourism, and contribute to the comprehensive revitalization of the countryside.

Keywords

Rural Tourism; Brand Construction; Thousand Villages Demonstration and Ten Thousand Villages Rehabilitation; Policy Support; Sustainable Development.

1. Introduction

In the context of the new era, the strategy for rural revitalization has become one of the crucial strategies for national development. The issuance of the "Opinions on Learning and Applying the Experience from the 'Thousand Villages Demonstration, Ten Thousand Villages Rehabilitation' Project to Effectively Promote Comprehensive Rural Revitalization" by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council has provided new guiding ideologies and action plans for the development of rural tourism. Rural tourism not only promotes the development of the rural economy but also facilitates the preservation of rural culture and the protection of the ecological environment, making it a vital approach to achieving comprehensive rural revitalization. However, the development of rural tourism also faces challenges such as insufficient brand building and fierce market competition. In this context, this paper aims to discuss the issues of brand construction in rural tourism under the new era, analyzing how the "Thousand Villages Demonstration, Ten Thousand Villages Rehabilitation" project can provide theoretical and practical support for the brand building of rural tourism. By analyzing the impact of the new era policy environment on rural tourism, this paper discusses the current situation and trends in the development of rural tourism, the role and strategies of brand construction. Through the study of strategies for rural tourism brand building and analysis of

countermeasures against challenges, the paper aims to provide guidance for the brand construction of rural tourism, promote the sustainable development of rural tourism, and contribute to the comprehensive revitalization of rural areas.

2. The Policy Impact and Development Prospects of Rural Tourism in the New Era

2.1. Impact of the New Era Policy Environment on Rural Tourism

The new era policy environment has had a profound impact on rural tourism, primarily manifested in the government's attention and support for rural tourism. With the transformation and upgrading of the economy, rural tourism has become an important way to promote the modernization of agriculture and achieve rural revitalization. The government has launched a series of support policies aimed at promoting the sustainable development of rural tourism, covering aspects such as financial support, tax incentives, land use, and environmental protection.

Firstly, the government has lowered the threshold for the development of rural tourism through financial support and tax incentives. This includes direct investment in rural tourism projects and fiscal subsidies for tourism enterprises and individual entrepreneurs. For example, some areas offer tax relief for rural tourism operators in the early stages of business to encourage more investors to participate in the construction of the rural tourism industry.

Secondly, the government has also formulated relevant land-use policies, allowing and supporting rural areas to convert agricultural land into tourism land. The implementation of this policy not only helps optimize the allocation of land resources but also provides spatial possibilities for the rural tourism industry. Moreover, it also enables rural areas to better protect their natural and cultural resources and develop distinctive tourism such as eco-tourism and cultural experience tours.

Thirdly, environmental protection policies are also a highlight in the new era policy environment. The government emphasizes that the development of rural tourism must adhere to the principles of ecological priority and green development. This is not only reflected in strict environmental protection regulations but also includes support for ecological restoration and environmental remediation in rural tourism areas. These measures aim to ensure the development of rural tourism is in harmony with the local ecological environment.

In summary, the policy environment of the new era provides solid support for the development of rural tourism. The government's various support measures not only promote the growth of the rural economy but also help protect and pass on rural culture, achieving a win-win situation for the tourism industry and rural revitalization. The continuous advancement and optimization of these policies will further promote the prosperity and sustainable development of the rural tourism industry.

2.2. Current Status of Rural Tourism in the New Era

According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, there are approximately 560,000 administrative villages in China, which are distributed across the country, especially in the central and western regions where villages are more concentrated. These areas typically possess rich natural and cultural resources, making them ideal locations for developing rural tourism.

In recent years, as the rural revitalization strategy advances, more and more villages have begun to drive local economies through the tourism industry. For example, according to a report by the China Tourism Academy, in 2019, rural tourism welcomed over 3 billion visitors, generating tourism revenue of more than 850 billion RMB. This figure represents a significant increase from previous years, indicating that rural tourism has become an important force in

driving rural economic growth, although the per capita income level still lags behind the continuous gap with urbanization.

China's rural areas have long faced issues of population aging and the outflow of young and middle-aged people. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, the country's elderly living alone and left-behind children, although this trend has eased in recent years, the problem of population structure remains prominent. By developing rural tourism, on the one hand, employment and income opportunities can be provided for the elderly remaining in the villages, and on the other hand, it can attract young people to return to their hometowns to start businesses, promoting a rebalancing of the population.

Driven by the rapid development of rural tourism, many rural areas have seen some improvement in infrastructure, and the service industry has also developed. For example, transportation facilities, accommodation services, and the catering industry have all seen significant improvements, which not only enhance the quality of life for local residents but also improve the tourism experience for visitors. To some extent, the development of rural tourism has also promoted improvements in local education, health, and other public services, thereby enhancing the overall living standards of residents. Continuous improvement in infrastructure is necessary to support the development of rural tourism. In the future, with the continued support of policies and further growth in market demand, the development potential of rural tourism is immense, and it will continue to play a key role in the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy.

2.3. The Development Significance of Rural Tourism in the New Era

Under the guidance of the thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era, rural tourism, as an important part of the national development strategy, plays a significant role in promoting comprehensive rural revitalization. This strategy not only promotes economic growth but also aids in cultural heritage and ecological protection, making it a key way to achieve sustainable development in rural areas.

Firstly, the development of rural tourism significantly boosts local economic growth. By attracting urban residents and tourists from other places, rural tourism directly increases the local economic revenue and improves the living standards of farmers. For example, visitors to rural areas directly consume local agricultural products, handicrafts, etc., which not only increases the sales of agricultural products but also promotes the development of local specialty industries. Furthermore, the growth of rural tourism also leads to an increase in employment opportunities, allowing many villagers who previously depended on agricultural income to earn additional income by providing accommodation, catering, and guide services, thereby diversifying economic sources and reducing economic fluctuations caused by seasonal agricultural work.

Secondly, rural tourism plays an important role in cultural heritage. Rural areas often possess rich historical cultures and traditional arts. By developing tourism, these cultural heritages are preserved and displayed, enhancing national cultural confidence. At the same time, the presentation to foreign visitors also strengthens cultural exchanges, enhancing the influence and reach of culture. For example, some villages with historical value attract tourists by restoring ancient buildings and hosting traditional festivals, which also allows more of the younger generation to understand and learn about local culture, effectively preventing the disappearance of culture.

Thirdly, the development of rural tourism contributes to ecological protection and environmental improvement. In the development concept of the new era, adhering to green development is a basic national policy, and the promotion of rural tourism helps raise public awareness of environmental protection. To attract tourists, many rural areas have begun to focus on environmental governance and ecological protection, such as building wetland parks,

protecting wildlife, etc. This not only improves the ecological environment of rural areas but also contributes to the protection of biodiversity. At the same time, the beautiful natural environment, in turn, becomes an important resource to attract tourists, forming a virtuous cycle.

In the context of the new era, rural tourism is not only a new engine for economic development but also an important carrier for cultural and ecological protection. By continuously promoting the high-quality development of rural tourism, the rural economy can be diversified, promoting social harmony and stability, and contributing to the realization of a comprehensively well-off society.

3. Strategies for Building Rural Tourism Brands

In the context of the new era, rural tourism has become a crucial way to promote rural revitalization and achieve sustainable development. With the government's increasing focus on and support for rural tourism, along with growing market demand, the construction of rural tourism brands has become particularly important. Effective branding strategies can enhance the appeal of rural tourism, strengthen its market competitiveness, and foster local economic and cultural development. Here are several core strategies for building rural tourism brands, aimed at providing guidance and support for the sustainable development of rural tourism.

3.1. Deepening Brand Positioning Strategy

Brand positioning is the foundation of brand building, requiring a precise understanding of the rural area's core values and characteristics, as well as the needs of the target market. First, through in-depth research and analysis, identify the unique advantages of the rural area such as natural resources, cultural heritage, and ecological environment, and transform these advantages into unique selling points of the brand. Second, through market research, understand the preferences, travel motivations, and behavior patterns of target consumers to ensure that the brand positioning accurately matches the needs of the target market. For example, for a village characterized by its ancient town culture, the brand positioning could be "Journey through Time in an Ancient Town," attracting tourists who have a deep interest in historical culture.

3.2. Innovating Brand Communication Strategy

In the digital age, innovative brand communication strategies are crucial for enhancing brand visibility and influence. Rural tourism brands should make full use of digital channels such as social media, online travel platforms, and official websites to creatively publish engaging content, such as VR travel experiences, interactive storytelling, and visitor reviews and recommendations, to attract and expand potential visitor groups. Additionally, collaborating with influencers and travel bloggers can effectively amplify the brand communication impact and enhance brand market recognition through their social network influence.

3.3. Optimizing Brand Experience Strategy

Providing an outstanding visitor experience is key to enhancing brand loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion. Rural tourism destinations should offer high-quality services and a variety of experience activities, such as specialty farm stays, cultural experience workshops, and participation in ecological agriculture, allowing visitors to deeply experience the charm of rural life. At the same time, focus on environmental protection and the sustainable inheritance of culture to ensure that while visitors enjoy their experiences, the natural and cultural resources of the countryside are also protected. For example, engaging in eco-tourism and cultural heritage protection projects allows visitors to enjoy natural beauty while participating in cultural preservation and environmental maintenance.

3.4. Strengthening Brand Cooperation Strategy

Successful construction of rural tourism brands requires cooperation among governments, businesses, and communities. Governments can encourage enterprises and communities to participate in the development and promotion of rural tourism by enacting favorable policies and providing financial support. Enterprises and communities can jointly develop tourism products, share resources, and collaboratively build and maintain rural tourism brands. For example, by establishing rural tourism cooperatives, local agricultural products and handicrafts can be integrated to develop a series of products and services that match the rural tourism brand. This multi-party cooperation model can effectively integrate resources, enhancing the overall competitiveness and influence of rural tourism brands.

In summary, through deepening brand positioning, innovating brand communication, optimizing brand experience, and strengthening brand cooperation, the construction of rural tourism brands can effectively promote the development of rural tourism and contribute to comprehensive rural revitalization. The implementation of these strategies requires the joint efforts and continuous innovation of all parties, to adapt to the changing market demands and development trends.

4. Challenges and Strategies for Building Rural Tourism Brands

In the context of the new era, while rural tourism brand building presents significant development opportunities, it also faces numerous challenges. These challenges stem from internal limitations in resources and capabilities as well as external market and policy environments. Effective strategies are needed to ensure the success of rural tourism brand building.

4.1. Main Challenges

Insufficient Resources and Infrastructure: Many rural areas lack sufficient tourism resources and infrastructure development, such as inconvenient transportation, and low-quality accommodation and dining services, which limit the development and promotion of rural tourism brands.

Weak Brand Awareness: Some rural areas lack a sufficient understanding of the importance of brand building, lacking effective brand planning and management, which makes it difficult for rural tourism brands to develop distinctiveness and competitiveness.

Difficulties in Market Promotion: Rural tourism faces fierce market competition and lacks effective marketing channels and methods, making it difficult to attract enough target tourists.

Shortage of Talent: Building a rural tourism brand requires specific expertise and skills, but many rural areas lack professionals in tourism management and service.

4.2. Strategies to Address Challenges in Building Rural Tourism Brands

The challenges faced in building rural tourism brands require comprehensive strategies and specific actions. Here are a series of targeted strategies and recommendations aimed at helping rural tourism achieve brand-building success:

Increase Policy and Financial Support: Governments should enact more robust policies to provide solid support for rural tourism brand building. This includes offering tax incentives, financial subsidies, and loan discounts, especially for infrastructure construction, environmental protection, and cultural heritage preservation projects. Additionally, governments can establish special funds to encourage and guide social capital investment in rural tourism projects, reducing investment risks and improving returns.

Strengthen Brand Awareness Education: Through organizing training sessions and promotional activities, enhance the awareness of rural residents and tourism practitioners of

the importance of brand building. These activities could include brand building workshops, success case sharing sessions, and lectures on tourism market trends, aimed at enhancing the brand consciousness and market sensitivity of rural tourism practitioners. Additionally, use media and public platforms to promote the success stories of rural tourism brands, inspiring more rural areas to engage in brand building.

Innovate Marketing Strategies: Rural tourism brands should fully utilize digital tools and platforms such as social media, Weibo, WeChat, and short video platforms, employing innovative content marketing strategies to enhance online visibility and interactivity. For example, hosting online photography contests, travel experience essay activities, and interactive Q&As can attract tourists' participation and sharing, enhancing the brand's appeal and influence. Additionally, establish collaborations with tourism e-commerce platforms to launch distinctive tourism products and promotional activities, expanding market coverage.

Cultivate and Attract Professional Talent: Building a rural tourism brand requires specialized knowledge and skills. Governments and businesses should work together to cultivate professionals in tourism management, marketing, and cultural communication through establishing tourism institutes, providing in-job training, and offering scholarships. Additionally, attract external professionals to join in rural tourism brand building by offering favorable policies and good career development opportunities, enhancing the overall professional level and innovative capacity.

Promote Multi-party Cooperation and Resource Sharing: Building a rural tourism brand requires close cooperation among governments, businesses, communities, and other stakeholders. Establish effective cooperation mechanisms such as brand alliances, cooperatives, and public-private partnerships (PPPs) to promote resource sharing and mutual benefits. For example, governments can act as coordinators and facilitators, guiding businesses and communities to jointly develop tourism products and share marketing resources, collectively enhancing the visibility and impact of rural tourism brands.

Focus on Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility: Building a rural tourism brand should adhere to the principles of sustainable development, focusing on environmental protection, cultural heritage preservation, and social responsibility. By launching eco-tourism projects and traditional cultural experience activities, not only can the quality of visitors' experiences be enhanced, but also the protection of local environments and cultures can be promoted. Additionally, ensure that the development of rural tourism brings tangible benefits to local residents, improving their support and participation in tourism projects through job creation, increased income, and improved living conditions.

In summary, building a rural tourism brand is a complex and long-term process that requires the joint efforts and continuous investment of governments, businesses, and communities. By implementing the above strategies and suggestions, the challenges encountered in the process of building rural tourism brands can be effectively addressed, promoting the healthy development of rural tourism and contributing to the realization of rural revitalization strategies.

5. Conclusion

This paper has conducted an in-depth discussion on the strategies for building rural tourism brands in the context of the new era, analyzed the current challenges faced by rural tourism, and proposed corresponding countermeasure recommendations. The research finds that although the construction of rural tourism brands faces challenges such as insufficient resources, weak brand awareness, difficulties in market promotion, and a shortage of talent, these can be effectively addressed by increasing policy and financial support, strengthening

brand awareness education, innovating marketing strategies, cultivating and introducing professional talent, and promoting multi-party cooperation and resource sharing.

The future direction of rural tourism brand building should focus more on differentiated positioning and distinctive development of the brand. Additionally, it should fully explore and utilize the cultural and natural resources of the countryside to create unique tourism experiences, thereby enhancing brand value. Moreover, the construction of rural tourism brands should actively respond to the requirements of sustainable development, focusing on ecological protection and cultural inheritance to achieve harmonious development of the economy, society, and environment.

By implementing these strategies and suggestions, rural tourism brand building will be able to effectively address current challenges, promote the healthy development of rural tourism, and make a positive contribution to the realization of rural revitalization strategies.

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