

Analysis of the Effectiveness of Xi'an City Image Communication Based on Audience Perception

Wang Jing

Xi'an Peihua University, Xi'an, Shannxi, 710125, China

Keywords: City image, Audience, Communication effect

Abstract: This article examines the composition of the city image of Xi'an and the effectiveness of media communication. First, the research defines the positioning of Xi'an's city image and clarifies the purpose of communication. After that, first-hand information is collected through a questionnaire survey in order to gain insight into audiences' perceptions of Xi'an's city image and to analyze its effectiveness in communicating its image to the public. Essentially, the image of a city is a reflection of the overall evaluation and comprehensive competitiveness of a modern city, and it is the "Abstract, intangible asset of any city". As an important component of the "One Belt, One Road" national strategy, Xi'an is one of China's "twin core" cities. The National Development and Reform Commission designated Xi'an as a "national city cluster with international influence" as early as 2018. The development of a new brand image for Xi'an is especially urgent in light of this prospect, as well as the development of an efficient communication pathway for the enhancement of Xi'an's city image. An important expression of a city's cultural spirit, value system, and cultural soft power is its brand image, which has unique recognition and cultural connotations. Essentially, a brand narrative conveys the core values and spiritual culture of the brand through storytelling as an important tool for brand building.

1. Introduction

Currently, there are a wide range of means for promoting the image of a city, including interpersonal communication, event communication, and media communication. In the era of new media, these are the most effective means of communication, whether they are traditional media such as radio and television, or new media such as the Internet and mobile phones, both of which are increasingly characterized by entertainment consumption. To obtain an in-depth understanding of the current situation of the communication of Xi'an's city image, this study used a quantitative research questionnaire. 756 questionnaires were collected during the survey period, which lasted from August to October 2022. As part of the survey, both local Xi'an audiences as well as Chinese audiences in other cities who had watched Xi'an films and dramas were included.

2. The Design of Questionnaires

The content of this questionnaire is based on Li Jing's (2018) research questionnaire, which is divided into three main parts [1]. Five questions are included in the first part of the survey, which is

a demographic survey of respondents. The second part consists of eight questions regarding the content of the communication of Xi'an city image as well as the audience's perception and evaluation of Xi'an city image. A third part of the paper discusses five questions related to the communication channels and the effectiveness of the communication of Xi'an's image as a city [1]. We design the questionnaire in a progressive manner, beginning with the audience's perception and evaluation of the content of the Xi'an city image communication. Next, an analysis of the effectiveness of media communication is presented, followed by an investigation of how media habits are changing in relation to new media [2].

3. Sample Characteristics

Among the respondents, 61.95% were female and 38.05% were male; 59.25% of the respondents were in the age group of 18 to 25 years old and 40.74% were in the age group of 25 to 39 years old, with the majority of the respondents being young people; 81.25% of the respondents had a college or bachelor's degree in education, with the majority of the participants having received higher education; the occupational distribution was dominated by students (51.39%) and employees of enterprises and institutions (26.61%). The occupational distribution was dominated by students (51.39%) and employees of enterprises and institutions (26.61%); half of the respondents, 58.53%, were residents of Xi'an, 13.26% were residents of Shaanxi Province (outside Xi'an), and 28.21% were residents of other provinces (See Table 1).

Table 1: Demographics

		Numbers	Percentage
Gender	Male	461	61.97%
	Female	295	38.03%
Age	18-25	448	59.25%
	25-39	308	40.74%

4. Findings

4.1 Audiences' Perceptions of Xi'an's City Image

(1) The first impression of Xi'an for 50.26% of the audience was “Ancient Capital”; 29.23% chose “Cultural City”; 11.51% chose “famous snacks”; 6.21% believed Xi'an was a “famous tourist city”; and only 2.77% believed Xi'an was a “Famous Tourist City”. A total of 6.21% of respondents claimed that Xi'an was a “famous tourist city” while only 2.77% claimed that Xi'an was an “International Metropolis”. Table 2 shows that most audiences agree that Xi'an is a famous historical city and that its reputation as an “Ancient Capital” has become deeply ingrained in people's minds; however, very few agree that it is an “International Metropolis”[3].

Table 2: the Impressions of Xi'an

The Impressions of Xi'an	Numbers	Percentage
Ancient Capital	380	50.26%
Cultural City	221	29.23%
Famous Snacks	87	11.51%
Famous Tourist City	47	6.21%
International Metropolis	21	2.77%

(2) Evaluation of important indicators of the audience's perception of Xi'an
As shows in Table 3, among audiences who were asked to evaluate the “A certain cultural

atmosphere” of Xi'an, 45.21% thought it had a certain atmosphere, 12.16% thought it had a strong atmosphere, and approximately 34.79% said it had an average or weak atmosphere.

Table 3: The Cultural Scene in Xian

The cultural scene in Xian	Numbers	Percentage
Strong cultural atmosphere	92	12.16%
A certain cultural atmosphere	342	45.21%
Fair cultural atmosphere	263	34.79%
Low cultural atmosphere	38	5.06%
Very little cultural atmosphere	21	2.77%

Based on the results of Table 4, the majority of the audiences agree that Xi'an has a cultural atmosphere. According to the results of the above two ratings, when asked to select Xi'an as the most suitable city, 54.14% selected “ancient capital,” 36.77% selected “famous historical and cultural city,” and only 3.87% selected “famous cultural city.” As shown in Table 4, only 4.49% of the audience selected “international metropolis.” The above table indicates that Xi'an is highly regarded as a 'historical and cultural city', while only a small percentage of the population acknowledges its role as an 'international metropolis'[4].

Table 4: the Most Appropriate Title for Xi'an

The most appropriate title for Xi'an	Numbers	Percentage
Ancient Capital	403	53.41%
Historical and Cultural City	278	36.77%
A cosmopolitan city	34	4.49%
Core City of China	31	4.11%
Other	10	1.32%

4.2 Analysis of the Effectiveness of Xi'an's City Image Communication

In the survey on the effectiveness of film and television productions to promote the image of Xi'an, 53.41% of respondents indicated that “Publicity is excellent”, 36.77% indicated that “Publicity is generally effective,” and nearly 9% said “Publicity is limited” or “No publicity at all.” According to Table 5, nearly 9% of respondents indicated “Publicity is limited” or “No publicity at all”.

Table 5: Audiences' Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Xi'an City Image Campaign

Audiences' evaluation of the effectiveness of the Xi'an city image campaign	Numbers	Percentage
Publicity is excellent	403	53.41%
Generally effective	278	36.77%
Publicity is limited	34	4.49%
No publicity at all	31	4.11%
Other	10	1.32%

Audiences were asked which films and dramas had left an impression on them regarding Xi'an, and these films and dramas included “Happy”, “Qiu Ju Fights the Law”, “That Year's Blossoms” and “The Xi'an Incident”. However, unfortunately, none of these productions have a contemporary image of the city of Xi'an. According to the results of this questionnaire, both traditional and new media, including film and television productions as well as city image publicity films, are lacking in terms of creating works that reflect the contemporary urban landscape of Xi'an and illustrate its rapid development and changes [5].

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire, it appears that the audience's perception of Xi'an's urban image remains at the level of “ancient capital” and “famous historical and cultural city”. There has been little attention paid to the image of Xi'an as an “international metropolis” and as a “quality metropolis”, which has been proposed in recent years. According to a comparative study of the effectiveness of the communication of Xi'an's image through different channels, both traditional and new media have almost lost their voices in the communication of the image of “Xi'an as an international metropolis”.

Secondly, in a survey of the audience's media habits, it is clear that the use of the Internet and mobile phones is the most common means of entertainment, and micro-image communication platforms such as Today's Headlines and ShakeYin short videos have gained the audience's attention and recognition as media platforms. On the basis of the new media context, the following recommendations are made to improve communication of the image of Xi'an as an “international metropolis” and as a “quality Xi'an”.

(1) A multi-channel, integrated means of communication that is all-round

New social media platforms, such as microblogs, WeChat, and short videos, are the most important media, and traditional media, such as television, are also important. Aside from the use of new media to disseminate Xi'an's image, newspapers and television are also used to promote the city. By collaborating and exchanging ideas between new and old media, Xi'an's city image will be disseminated to the greatest extent possible. By relying on the power of fans, WeChat and microblogs can be used to spread the image of Xi'an by relying on word-of-mouth propaganda and a geometric spread effect.

(2) Combining online and offline communication to achieve multiple communication effects

In addition to integrated communication between old and new media, activities related to the promotion of Xi'an's city image can also be organized. To promote the development of micro-films and micro-documentaries and to establish reward mechanisms, micro-film festivals or micro-documentary competitions may be organized to involve students and teachers from universities or social forces in their creation. In addition to achieving secondary communication of the city image of Xi'an, thematic activities of the city image of Xi'an, such as city tours, can also be conducted in order to promote the city image of the city.

(3) UGC (user-generated content) + “refined” target audience service

Microblogs, WeChat, short video apps, or the creation of microfilms and microdocumentaries can be used to increase the dissemination of Xi'an's city image through user-generated content. Take advantage of the social media platforms of Weibo and WeChat to collect the opinions of audiences and segment them based on their interests. In order to enhance interactivity and participation, and to fulfill the audience's interest in experiencing and sharing the city's image, micro-images of the city's image can be created for different audiences and placed on social media platforms. Secondly, through the viral spread of social media platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and Jitterbug, the city's image is effectively communicated.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the Shaanxi Provincial Research Project on Major Theoretical and Practical Issues in Philosophy and Social Sciences (2022ND0413).

References

[1] Li J. *Exploring micro-images and city image communication*, *Center for the Performing Arts*, 2018, 16(02), 59-60.

- [2] Meng S. J., Wang C., & Guo J. *Based on the theory of brand narrative Research on the Construction of Cultural Tourism Brand Story and External Communication in Shaanxi. Journal of Western Studies*, 2021, 153,022-026.
- [3] Xu H. Z., & Zhu M. Q. *Research on Promoting Sustainable Development of Cultural Tourism Industry in Shaanxi, Research and Development Times*, 2019, 22(01), 112-115.
- [4] Eric W.T. Ngai, Spencer S.C. Tao, Karen K.L. Moon. *Social media research: Theories, constructs, and conceptual frameworks, International Journal of Information Management*, 2015, 13(02), pp.33-44.
- [5] Wang K. *Imagery Communication of City Image in Urban Microfilm, Youth Journal Journalist*, 2015, 15(03), 58-61.