

# *Ideas and Countermeasures for the Development of Cultural and Tourism Industry Clusters in Sichuan*

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**Abstract:** As one of China's provinces with the richest cultural tourism resources, Sichuan boasts a profound historical heritage and diverse natural landscapes. Nevertheless, the development of the cultural tourism industry still faces challenges such as resource dispersion and an incomplete industrial chain. The development of cultural tourism industry clusters presents a crucial pathway to address these issues. By consolidating related resources and promoting the collaborative development of the upstream and downstream sectors of the industry, it can significantly enhance the overall competitiveness and sustainability of the industry. This paper analyzes the current state of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry, explores the core concepts of developing cultural tourism industry clusters, and proposes specific strategies, aiming to provide theoretical and practical references for the high-quality development of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry.

## **1. Introduction**

In recent years, the profound integration of culture and tourism has become a global trend in industrial development. As a major cultural and tourism province in China, Sichuan faces the critical challenge of effectively harmonizing its rich cultural resources with its unique tourism assets to drive high-quality local economic growth. Sichuan's distinctive geographical environment and abundant historical and cultural resources have given rise to a diverse array of cultural tourism products. However, the current development model of the cultural tourism industry still suffers from incomplete industrial chains and insufficient market competitiveness, hindering the full realization of the economic and social benefits of the sector. The industrial cluster model, by fostering cooperation between enterprises, resource sharing, and innovation-driven growth, can significantly enhance overall industry competitiveness and risk resilience. A thorough exploration of the strategies and approaches for the development of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry clusters is of great significance not only for Sichuan's own advancement but also as a valuable reference for other regions seeking to achieve cultural tourism industry upgrades through industrial clusters.

## **2. Analysis of the current situation of cultural tourism industry in Sichuan**

The current state of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry presents a landscape where immense potential and complex challenges coexist. As a province rich in cultural resources, Sichuan is home to an extensive historical heritage, including landmarks such as the Sanxingdui Civilization and the

Dujiangyan Irrigation System, as well as a wealth of intangible cultural heritage, such as Sichuan Opera and Shu Embroidery, which form a robust foundation for the tourism industry. However, the current distribution of Sichuan's cultural tourism resources is relatively fragmented and lacks systematic integration, leading to underutilization in certain areas. Additionally, despite the vast scale of the tourism market, there is an over-reliance on traditional sightseeing tourism, with insufficient development of experiential and culturally immersive tourism products. Sichuan's integration of the upstream and downstream segments of the industry remains weak, with the cultural and tourism sectors not achieving deeper symbiosis. Addressing these issues requires enhancing the synergy between cultural and tourism resources, leveraging innovation and technological advancements to diversify and enhance the appeal of tourism products, thereby fostering economic growth in a more sustainable and globally competitive manner [1].

### **3. Thoughts on the development of cultural tourism industry cluster in Sichuan**

#### **3.1. Theoretical basis of industrial clusters**

The theory of industrial clusters, originating from economic location theory and competitive advantage theory, underscores how geographically concentrated enterprises and institutions can forge greater competitiveness through close collaboration, resource sharing, and information exchange. In the realm of cultural tourism, clustering enables a more profound integration of cultural resources and tourism products via the vertical and horizontal connections of the industry chain, thereby enhancing overall industry efficiency. The theoretical foundation for the cluster development of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry lies in the effective integration and cooperation of regional resources. Through clustering, the efficiency of collaboration among tourism enterprises, cultural institutions, and supporting service providers is significantly improved, thereby driving industry innovation and market expansion. Crucially, industrial clusters not only enhance regional economic competitiveness through scale and network effects but also foster knowledge spillovers within an innovative environment. The inherent characteristics of the cultural tourism industry make its clustering effects more intricate and diversified; clusters must not only focus on economic benefits but also on the protection and preservation of cultural resources. By integrating diverse entities through the cluster model, Sichuan's rich cultural resources and natural landscapes can drive the establishment of an innovative ecosystem, creating a globally attractive cultural tourism brand and positioning Sichuan as an international benchmark in cultural tourism.

#### **3.2. The core idea of Sichuan cultural tourism industry cluster development**

##### **3.2.1. Resource integration and optimal allocation**

The integration and optimization of resources are pivotal to advancing the cultural and tourism industry cluster in Sichuan. As a province rich in cultural and natural assets, Sichuan boasts a diverse array of resources, including historical sites, intangible cultural heritage, and scenic landscapes. However, the current utilization of these resources is relatively fragmented, with issues of redundant development, resource wastage, and uneven regional development. Therefore, the focus of resource integration should be on systematically categorizing and rationally distributing these unique cultural and tourism resources, achieving maximum utilization through regional collaboration. Optimization of allocation involves combining various tiers of cultural, natural, and industrial resources to create a complementary system. For instance, establishing cross-regional cooperation mechanisms can merge natural scenery with historical culture to craft a comprehensive tourism experience, thereby avoiding the development of isolated attractions. The true advantage of

Sichuan's tourism resources lies not in isolated natural landscapes or cultural heritage but in the symbiosis of diverse cultural and natural resources. This synergy requires effective resource integration to avoid homogenized competition, develop differentiated brands, and thus stand out in the market, bringing synergistic effects and sustained development to all segments of the industry chain.

### **3.2.2. Innovation drive and technical support**

Innovation-driven approaches and technological support are crucial engines propelling the development of Sichuan's cultural and tourism industry clusters. The innovation in the cultural tourism sector extends beyond the creative enhancement of products and services, encompassing comprehensive transformations in business models, market operations, and visitor experiences. The application of modern technologies such as digitalization, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality is profoundly reshaping traditional tourism operations. Leveraging these technological advancements enables an all-encompassing smart upgrade, from scenic area management and visitor services to cultural dissemination, thereby offering tourists more immersive and interactive experiences. Simultaneously, innovation must be deeply integrated with local culture, allowing technology to become an integral part of cultural expression rather than merely an overlay. For instance, the digital restoration of the Sanxingdui site to showcase the splendor of ancient Shu civilization transcends temporal and spatial constraints, attracting a broader spectrum of domestic and international visitors [2]. While enhancing service efficiency, technological support also ensures better protection and transmission of cultural resources. Through the sharing of technological platforms and collaborative innovation, enterprises within the industry cluster can significantly boost the overall competitiveness, laying a solid foundation and providing robust impetus for the global development of Sichuan's cultural tourism sector.

### **3.2.3. Brand building and market expansion**

Brand development and market expansion are among the core drivers of the Sichuan cultural tourism industry cluster's growth. Sichuan, with its rich historical heritage and profound cultural legacy, boasts diverse cultural elements such as panda culture, Sichuan cuisine, and tea culture. However, the recognition and influence of these unique cultural resources on the global stage still require enhancement. To achieve this, it is imperative to establish a regional cultural tourism brand with global competitiveness, creating a brand matrix based on distinct Sichuanese cultural symbols and narrating tourism stories with local flavor. In terms of market expansion, the integration of a global perspective with local characteristics is crucial. The Sichuan cultural tourism industry cluster should actively engage in international tourism market competition, leveraging various international platforms to showcase the unique charm of Sichuan's culture. Simultaneously, it is essential to segment target markets and design differentiated tourism products tailored to diverse cultural backgrounds and tourist needs, employing precise marketing strategies to enhance market penetration. Brand development is not merely about shaping an image but serves as a catalyst for market expansion. Only through continuous market innovation and deepening brand cultivation can the Sichuan cultural tourism industry steadily expand and achieve long-term success in the global market.

## **4. Countermeasures for the Development of Sichuan Cultural Tourism Industry Cluster**

### **4.1. Policy support and planning**

Policy support and planning are critical assurances for the development of cultural and tourism

industry clusters in Sichuan, determining the direction, pace, and sustainability of industrial growth. The government plays a dual role as both regulator and guide in resource allocation for the advancement of these clusters. Effective policy support encompasses not only financial investment and land allocation but also extends to tax incentives, talent acquisition, and market supervision, providing a comprehensive system of support. Only through such holistic policy guarantees can enterprises within the clusters thrive, enhancing their innovative capacities and market competitiveness. On the foundation of policy support, sound and rational planning serves as a fundamental guarantee for the development of industry clusters. The cultural tourism industry spans various domains, including the preservation and development of cultural heritage as well as the upgrading of modern tourism facilities and services. Planning should focus on coordinating regional resources to create an integrated cultural tourism ecosystem [3]. For instance, Sichuan's rich cultural resources and natural landscapes are dispersed throughout the region; thus, planning should foster coordinated development among different areas, preventing excessive concentration or redundant development of resources, and mitigating the risk of homogenized competition. The government should also guide the deep integration of cultural tourism with other related industries through policy direction and long-term planning, such as collaboration with cultural innovation, sports, and agriculture sectors. By centering on culture, tourism should be organically combined with modern service industries to generate synergistic effects among industries, expanding both the scope and substance of the industry clusters. Furthermore, policy planning must emphasize sustainability, integrating environmental protection principles throughout the tourism development process to ensure the sustainable use of cultural heritage and natural resources. Policy support requires not only macro-regulation but also meticulous implementation and evaluation, with timely adjustments to address issues arising in the industrial development process. Through flexible policy tools, the government can offer necessary support and guarantees to enterprises at various stages of development, enhancing the resilience and dynamic growth of industry clusters.

#### **4.2. Industrial cooperation and alliances**

Industrial cooperation and alliances represent crucial strategies for advancing the development of Sichuan's cultural and tourism industry clusters, effectively enhancing the sector's competitiveness and overall efficacy. In this context, collaboration among various enterprises and institutions allows for the optimal utilization of respective resources and advantages, fostering resource sharing and complementarity. Such cooperation not only facilitates the growth of individual enterprises but also propels the optimization and upgrading of the entire industry chain, thereby augmenting the overall competitiveness of Sichuan's cultural tourism sector. Through industrial cooperation, businesses can jointly develop new tourism products and services, thereby expanding market reach. For instance, tourism companies might collaborate with cultural and creative firms or technology enterprises to create tourism projects featuring Sichuan's unique characteristics, such as VR-enhanced experiences of ancient Shu civilization or interactive entertainment projects themed around pandas. This kind of cross-industry collaboration not only heightens the appeal of tourism products but also generates additional value. These innovative projects also help extend visitor stay durations, elevate spending levels, and ultimately enhance economic benefits. Establishing industry alliances serves as an effective means to achieve in-depth collaboration. By forming cultural and tourism industry alliances, relevant enterprises and institutions can better coordinate and cooperate, enhancing overall synergistic effects in the market competition. Within such alliances, member organizations can share market information and technological resources, collaborate on market promotion and brand development, and generate collective impact. For example, different scenic spots might introduce joint ticketing systems and establish big data platforms to share and analyze visitor

information, thereby offering more precise marketing strategies and superior service experiences. Additionally, government bodies and industry associations play significant roles in fostering industrial cooperation and alliances. Governments can encourage corporate participation in cooperation and alliance building through policy guidance and funding, while industry associations can create platforms to facilitate communication and collaboration among businesses, standardize industry practices, and promote overall development. Relying on this collaborative mechanism involving multiple stakeholders, Sichuan's cultural and tourism industry can better navigate market changes and competitive pressures, achieving sustained and healthy growth. Ultimately, through industrial cooperation and alliances, each link within the Sichuan cultural tourism industry cluster can realize efficient resource allocation and value maximization, continuously enhance innovation capabilities and market responsiveness, and provide robust support for the steady development of Sichuan's cultural tourism in both domestic and international markets [4].

#### **4.3. Talent Cultivation and Technological Innovation**

The cultivation of talent and technological innovation are the driving forces behind the development of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry cluster. The application of high-caliber talent and cutting-edge technologies significantly enhances the competitiveness and innovative capabilities of the cultural tourism sector, thereby advancing the overall upgrade and optimization of the industry cluster. The unique nature of the cultural tourism industry lies in its rich cultural heritage and extensive market demand, and the effective integration of these elements relies on the recruitment and training of specialized talent. In terms of talent development, the cultural tourism sector requires multifaceted professionals who not only understand cultural connotations but also possess market acumen. Higher education institutions, vocational training centers, and enterprises should work closely together to establish an integrated talent cultivation mechanism that combines practical experience with theoretical knowledge to nurture professionals suited to the industry's needs. This includes not only talents for the protection and development of cultural resources but also experts in marketing, brand building, and service management. Particularly in the digital age, the tourism industry urgently needs versatile talents with technological and creative skills who can seamlessly blend traditional culture with modern technology to create distinctive travel experiences. Technological innovation is crucial for advancing the cultural tourism industry towards intelligence and digitization. The rapid advancement of modern technology offers limitless possibilities for the cultural tourism sector, with applications of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and blockchain substantially enhancing the visitor experience. For instance, AR and VR technologies can provide immersive experiences of Sichuan's historical and cultural heritage, while the integration of big data and artificial intelligence can deliver precise visitor behavior analysis, aiding companies in optimizing services and product design. Moreover, technological innovation can improve operational efficiency and market adaptability within the industry cluster. For example, smart management systems in scenic spots can enable real-time monitoring and management of visitor flow, preventing overcrowding and enhancing visitor comfort and safety. The government should also establish technology innovation incubators and provide funding support to encourage continuous innovation by enterprises and research institutions, fostering the practical application of technology. In conclusion, the accumulation of talent and continuous technological breakthroughs are key elements for achieving high-quality development of the Sichuan cultural tourism industry cluster. Only through ongoing talent development and technological innovation can the core competitiveness of the industry be strengthened and Sichuan's cultural tourism's position in the global market steadily enhanced.



#### 4.4. Marketing and Brand Building

Marketing and brand building are pivotal elements in advancing the development of the Sichuan cultural tourism industry cluster. Sichuan's unique historical and cultural heritage, along with its abundant natural resources, provides a profound foundation and expansive potential for brand development. In the increasingly competitive global tourism market, precise marketing strategies and robust brand positioning are not only essential for enhancing Sichuan's tourism appeal but also for establishing its presence in both domestic and international markets. Effective marketing must be intricately aligned with the diversity of Sichuan's cultural tourism resources, crafting a distinctive brand image. Sichuan's cultural tourism resources encompass rich historical and cultural elements such as Three Kingdoms culture, Sichuan opera, Sichuan cuisine, and tea culture, alongside natural attractions like Mount Emei and giant pandas. Transforming these elements into marketable assets requires an in-depth exploration of their cultural significance and the creation of a differentiated brand image to attract diverse visitor demographics. For instance, targeting family tourists might involve emphasizing child-friendly travel experiences and the ecological conservation and interactive engagement at the giant panda base. Conversely, for culture enthusiasts, historical and cultural thematic tours could highlight the unique allure of Sichuan's heritage. Brand building extends beyond the mere packaging of individual attractions or projects; it is about shaping the comprehensive image of the region. Sichuan's cultural tourism brand should focus on coherence, linking various regions and resources to form an integrated brand network. This approach not only enhances the appeal of individual attractions but also fosters collaborative development across different areas, boosting overall tourism competitiveness [5]. During the promotion phase, adopting international branding strategies and actively participating in global tourism exhibitions, cooperative platforms, and cross-cultural exchanges can significantly elevate Sichuan's global profile. The essence of a brand lies in its uniqueness and longevity. Establishing Sichuan's cultural tourism brand necessitates cultivating an irreplaceable cultural identity in the minds of tourists. By creating immersive tourism experiences—such as cultural festivals, experiential activities, and even through the export of films and literary works—Sichuan's distinctive cultural symbols can be deeply ingrained in the public consciousness, ensuring the brand's enduring success.

#### 4.5. Infrastructure and Service Enhancement

The enhancement of infrastructure and services is a crucial element in driving the sustained development of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry cluster, as well as a necessary measure to optimize visitor experiences and bolster market competitiveness. Superior infrastructure not only provides convenience for travelers but also serves as a vital link connecting major tourism resources and industrial chains. The competition in cultural tourism is no longer confined to the allure of individual attractions but is reflected in the efficient operation and comprehensive service capabilities of the entire regional tourism system. The construction of infrastructure should initially focus on improving the transportation network. Sichuan's complex geographical conditions, with many high-quality cultural and natural tourism resources located in remote mountainous areas, place higher demands on transportation. By enhancing highways, railways, and aviation facilities, travel times between different attractions can be significantly reduced, thus improving regional connectivity. Future developments in smart transportation systems, such as intelligent navigation and real-time traffic data monitoring, will also offer visitors a more convenient travel experience, thereby enhancing their satisfaction. On the other hand, the improvement of internal facilities within attractions is a core factor in elevating tourism quality. Infrastructure should not only address "hardware" aspects but also focus on enhancing "soft" services. Supporting services within attractions, such as modernized information guidance systems, cleanliness and safety of public

facilities, and optimization of dining and accommodation facilities, are integral to the visitor experience. High-quality infrastructure and services not only directly impact visitor perception but also largely determine whether visitors will make repeat purchases or recommendations. Therefore, relevant departments and enterprises should continuously attend to these details, enhancing service quality to build a strong reputation and brand image. The development of smart tourism also presents new opportunities for service enhancement. By incorporating digital and intelligent service systems, such as smart tour guides, online bookings, and electronic payments, visitors can enjoy more efficient and convenient services. Big data technology can also assist attractions in predicting visitor flow and optimizing resource allocation, thus preventing overcrowding and resource wastage. Additionally, digital displays and interactive technologies, such as AR tours and virtual museums, not only enrich the depth of visitor experience but also drive innovation and added value in cultural tourism content. The enhancement of infrastructure and services in Sichuan's cultural tourism sector is not merely to meet basic visitor needs but to create unique tourism experiences and efficient operational systems. Through sustained investment and innovation, Sichuan will be able to further enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of its tourism industry and drive the transformation of the cultural tourism industry cluster towards high-quality development.

## 5. Conclusion

The advancement of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry hinges upon the integration of resources, innovation-driven strategies, and policy support. The establishment of industry clusters involves not merely the aggregation of resources but requires a market-oriented approach that emphasizes enhancing overall competitiveness and sustainability. By improving infrastructure, fostering talent development, and optimizing the policy environment, the development of Sichuan's cultural tourism industry clusters can introduce new growth opportunities for the regional economy and provide a broader space for cultural preservation and heritage. In the future, as the effects of clustering gradually manifest, Sichuan's cultural tourism industry is poised to secure a prominent position in the global arena and become a model for the development of China's cultural tourism sector.

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