

# Enlightenment from the Development of Exhibition Tourism in Hannover to Wuhan

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**Abstract:** As the most promising emerging industries in 21st century, exhibition tourism plays significant role in promoting the development of economy, culture and society. Hannover is the exhibition capital of the world, where the development of exhibition tourism started early. And it has adequate foundation and advanced experience in developing exhibition tourism. This paper aims at comparing the development of exhibition tourism between Hannover and Wuhan to present a series of strategies for Wuhan to recover exhibition tourism.

## 1. Introduction

MICE tourism is an international and comprehensive concept. It is a segment market of international tourism market, which includes meeting, incentive, convention and exhibition. It is also a specific tourism product and a new travel way, organizing various types of meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions, combing these activities with travel. Since it has specific times, places and themes, it is very different form traditional leisure tourism and vacation tourism.

Exhibition tourism is an important part of MICE tourism. With economic activities developing, exhibition industry has an indivisible relationship with tourism industry. MICE tourism is the inevitable outcome of the combination of the exhibition industry and tourism industry. Exhibition industry is an important driving force for the continuous development of tourism industry. It has brought more customers and increased a variety of consumption to the tourism industry, driving the joint development of catering, accommodation, transportation and scenic spots. It is also conducive to shaping the image of tourism city and providing a good environment for the development and expansion of tourism. Tourism is an important condition for the sustainable development of exhibition industry. Tourism provides the exhibition industry with all-round and multi-level services and resources, which can meet the needs of exhibitors and visitors, enhance the experience of participants, and enhance the brand effect and popularity of the exhibition industry. Exhibition industry and tourism industry are closely integrated and interact with and promote each other to promote each other's development.

This paper focuses on the development of exhibition industry, especially the inspiration of Hannover exhibition tourism development to Wuhan.

## 2. Overview of Exhibition Tourism

### 2.1 Research significance

#### 2.1.1 Economic benefit

Exhibition economy has great direct economic benefits, which can bring high income and profits for the country and city hosting exhibitions. At the same time, it also has strong economic benefits, which can drive the development of catering, hotel, transportation, advertising, communication and other industries in the region and increase employment opportunities. Holding exhibitions is also

conducive to creating a good marketing place for enterprises, so that enterprises can better obtain effective information, promote and sell products, guide consumer demands and establish corporate images.

### **2.1.2 Cultural benefit**

The exhibition can facilitate information exchange, academic exchange and discussion between exhibition tourists and peers, which is conducive to the spread of science and technology and cultural knowledge. Meanwhile the tourism activities of exhibition tourists can make them understand each other with local residents and promote the development of cultural diversity.

### **2.1.3 Social benefit**

The development of exhibition tourism, on one hand, promotes the city to constantly improve its various aspects of urban construction, all-round enhancement of the comprehensive strength of the city. On the other hand, it helps the city continuously improve its tourism image, enhance its domestic and international status, improve its popularity, build an international tourism brand, and attract more tourists to come for sightseeing.

## **2.2 Development Situation**

The pattern of global exhibition industry is changing rapidly, and the development focus has gradually shifted to emerging market countries, such as Singapore and South Korea.

However, the traditional international conference center still occupies an important position in the exhibition market because of its long exhibition history and perfect supporting facilities. At present, the exhibition market is developing towards the direction of scale and specialization, and the status of international conference center city is becoming more and more prominent.

China's Hong Kong region has unique geographical advantages, convenient transportation conditions and a higher level of international opening, exhibition tourism development trend is rapid, known as the "international exhibition capital", exhibition has become one of the pillar industries of its economic development.

At present, China's mainland mice tourism development trend is rapid, the exhibition venue area and the number of held exhibitions steady growth, the number of overseas exhibitions is rising. China's exhibition tourism industry has basically formed five exhibition economic and industrial belts, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Dalian, Chengdu, xi 'an, Kunming and other exhibition center cities, as well as five exhibition economic and industrial belts, including the Bohai rim, Yangtze river delta, pearl river delta, northeast exhibition economic belt and Midwest exhibition city economic belt.

According to the data released by China exhibition economic development report 2018, it can be seen that, in recent years, China's exhibition industry has maintained a good momentum of development, with the number and area of exhibition steadily increasing and the level of exhibition going abroad steadily improving. The number and area of exhibition halls have maintained an overall growth trend, but the growth rate of total supply has slowed down. Association (UFI) in the international exhibition organizers of the 2017 global venue indoor exhibition area of the top 10 countries, China in 110 - seat stadium and indoor exhibition area of 5753724 square meters is the second in the world.

## **3. Comparative analysis and research on exhibition tourism development between Hannover and Wuhan**

### **3.1 The similarities**

#### **3.1.1 Location condition**

Germany lies in the middle of Europe, and Hannover is the capital of the German subdivision of Saxony, located in the north-central Germany and located in Paris to Moscow, northern Europe to

Italy "crossroads". Wuhan is located in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze river in China, and It has a good reputation as "a thoroughfare of nine provinces" since ancient times. No matter Hannover or Wuhan has excellent geographical position. As important transportation hubs inland and abroad, the water, land and air transportation networks of the two cities are complete and extend in all directions, which not only facilitates the connection of domestic cities, but also facilitates the arrival of international exhibitors, tourists and visitors.

### **3.1.2 Economic level**

Wuhan and Hannover are both important economic and cultural centers and sub-centers. The industrial and manufacturing industry of Hannover is highly developed, and it is the industrial center of German automobile, machinery and electronics. In addition, the commercial, financial and insurance industries are developing well, and the exhibition and tourism industries are booming. Hannover is known as the exhibition capital of the world.

Since liberation, Wuhan has become an important industrial base in China. Now it has formed an industrial system with strong supporting capacity in various industries such as steel, automobile, mechanical equipment and electronic information. Wuhan is the largest commercial distribution center in the middle reaches of the Yangtze River as well.

### **3.1.3 Scientific and technological level**

Both Wuhan and Hannover have advanced science and technology level and innovation ability. Hannover has a long history of science and technology development and a good foundation, and always attaches importance to the development of science and technology, and constantly increase the capital investment in universities, vigorously support the cultivation of talents. Wuhan has a national key high-tech development zone, which is in the forefront of optical fiber and cable, computer software, new materials, communications and other fields. Wuhan is also the city with the largest number of universities in the world, and it has been committed to promoting the development of science and education. The advanced level of science and technology and the strong reserve of talents make Wuhan full of vitality.

### **3.1.4 Infrastructure**

Hannover city rail transit has 15 lines and easy access to all the venues. Hotel facilities and services in and around the venues are good and the price is relatively low. The tertiary industry developed, catering and recreational facilities can meet the demand of diversification of tourists. Wuhan now has 9 middle track lines in operation, and within five years will realize the full coverage of the rail network of "connecting the main city with the new city". There are more than 100 star-rated hotels and guesthouses in the city, which are rich in hotel resources, leading in the catering industry in China, and compatible with all kinds of dishes in the world.

### **3.1.5 Venue construction**

Exhibition venues are the most basic and important hardware facilities in the development of exhibition tourism. Hannover Exhibition Center ranks the first in the world in terms of indoor space used in exhibition halls, while Wuhan international Expo Center ranks the 19th. In addition to the usable area, these two exhibition centers attach importance to the construction of hardware infrastructure, keep the facility convenient and advanced, and devote itself to bring comfortable experience for exhibitors and visitors. Besides Wuhan also has Wuhan International Convention and Exhibition center, China Optical Valley Science and Technology Convention and Exhibition center, China Culture and Exhibition Center and other venues. Four venues form a good exhibition space layout in Wuhan according to the industrial advantages of their respective regions, to meet the diversified exhibition demand.

### **3.1.6 Tourism resources**

Wuhan and Hannover are rich in natural tourism resources and cultural tourism resources. Hannover has beautiful natural scenery, numerous beautiful gardens and palaces, rich museum resources, and large theater, which can meet the diverse tourism needs of tourists. "Hundreds of Lake City" Wuhan city has more than 100 lakes and dozens of peaks, beautiful natural scenery, one thousand in the origin of "Jing chu" culture, cultural heritage. There are many scenic spots in and around Wuhan, and the scenic spots cover a variety of types, which can meet the needs of tourists in viewing, experience, culture and other aspects. Wuhan currently has three 5A Scenic Spots, the deputy provincial cities of the country's first, 15 4A Scenic Spots. In addition, Wuhan has Wuhan Theatre, QinTai Grand Theatre, Hubei Theatre, HanXiu Theatre and other theatres, which can fully meet people's spiritual and cultural needs.

## **3.2 The difference**

### **3.2.1 Historical development**

Wuhan and Hannover in history which has a good start of the exhibition industry development foundation, but on the different development road. Hannover has been developing and expanding since the industrial exposition was held in 1947, and has become the "exhibition capital of the world". In the 1950s and 1960s, Wuhan was one of the four major exhibition cities in China. However, due to the demolition of Wuhan exhibition hall, the development of exhibition industry was stagnated until the beginning of this century. As the development of exhibition industry in Wuhan are far behind the other three big exhibition cities, lost the good development opportunities and conditions.

### **3.2.2 Domestic economic environment**

According to 2017 world GDP data, China ranks second in the world with \$12.24 trillion, Germany ranks fourth with \$3.68 trillion, and Europe ranks first.

The German government according to the trend of economic development, seize the opportunity, science and technology innovation constantly adjust industrial policy, promote domestic industrial structure optimization and upgrading. From the 1950s and 1960s, attention was paid to the development of the secondary industry, to the rapid development of the tertiary industry in the 1920s and 1980s, and to the use of science and technology to promote the recovery of the secondary industry in the 1990s, until 2017, the three industrial structures in Germany accounted for 0.6%, 30.1% and 69.3% respectively.

In China, the internal structure of the third industry still is not very reasonable, development is relatively lagging, although the third industry of China's economic contribution rate increased, but China's economic growth is driven by the second industry. In 2017 China's three industrial structure accounted for 7.9%, 40.5% and 51.6% respectively. China's industrial policy still needs to be adjusted.

### **3.2.3 Organization pattern**

Hannover's exhibition organization pattern is mainly "government leadership is given priority to, the association to organize and coordinate, the company direct management". The functions of the government, industry associations and companies are mutually integrated, and none of them is dispensable. Under the mutual coordination, the organization of the exhibition is clearly positioned, closely coordinated with other industries, and the division of labor is coordinated, so as to achieve sustainable development and avoid repeated waste of resources. At the same time, give full play to the autonomy of the enterprise, continue to explore and innovate, so that Hannover exhibition industry has been in the leading position in the international. And Wuhan exhibition industry is constantly improve led by government, held by the enterprise, social participation, the operation of the market movement, the linkage mechanism, the relevant enterprises play a major role in organizing exhibition, but because of the enterprise on a smaller scale, it is difficult to form scale effect and brand effect. Low degree of internationalization, the lack of a strong policy measures and

regulation makes Wuhan exhibition market competition, repetitious exhibitions, waste of resources, the overall level is low.

### **3.2.4 Strategic positioning and brand building**

Hannover has been striving to attract international exhibitors and visitors since the first Industrial Exposition. Meanwhile, it also focuses on the development of international exhibition industry, timely follows the trend, and conducts overseas exhibition and investment. In the 2018 world top 100 business exhibitions compiled by Import and Export Manager Magazine, there are 51 trade fairs in Germany, among which 10 are held in Hannover. The famous trade fair brands like Hannover industrial fair and CeBIT have been formed. With the continuous development of exhibition industry in Wuhan, there are more and more brand exhibition industry held in Wuhan. But most of the exhibition with small scale, low level, the lack of brand effect, failed to integrate with the international level.

### **3.2.5 Cultivation of talents**

Although both Hannover and Wuhan attach great importance to the training of scientific researchers, Hannover is far ahead of Wuhan in the training of professionals in the exhibition industry. Hannover attaches great importance to the training of exhibition talents. Colleges and universities all offer exhibition majors, and pay attention to the combination of industry and education. They attach importance to the training of theoretical knowledge and strengthen the practical experience of practitioners, encourage them to practice and learn in industry associations, and issue certificates to graduates. As "the city with the largest number of university students in the world", Wuhan has obvious educational advantages but few universities specializing in exhibition management. In Hubei province, only Hubei University of Economics offers the major of exhibition economy and management, and only 8 other junior colleges offer the major of exhibition planning and management. Most universities only regard exhibition management as a professional course of tourism management and do not focus on training specialized exhibition talents.

## **4. Conclusion**

### **4.1 Improve the organizational model**

Wuhan government should learn Hannover exhibition organization model, establish such as "association of government leadership, organization and coordination, company direct" mode.

#### **4.1.1 Government leadership**

In the process of promoting the development of exhibition tourism in Wuhan, the government should play an active leading role in the macro-control, promulgation of laws and regulations, formulation of mice industry development strategy and planning, shaping Wuhan exhibition brand effect, and other aspects, do a good job of leadership and management. On the basis of full investigation, it integrates the resources of the whole industry, focuses on modernization, specialization and internationalization, promotes the coordinated development of other industries and exhibition industry, deeply integrates tourism, hotel, transportation and other related industries with exhibition industry, and realizes the integration of exhibition and tourism. In addition, Wuhan government can set up holding companies of state-owned enterprises to directly manage exhibition venues and lead other small enterprises and private enterprises to jointly undertake exhibitions. While guaranteeing the standardization and quality of exhibitions and better shaping the brand image of Wuhan exhibition, it can mobilize the creative vitality of small and micro subjects of non-public enterprises to generate income for Wuhan.

#### **4.1.2 Association of coordination**

Wuhan government should actively guide the establishment of an authoritative industry association in the exhibition industry, be responsible for organizing and coordinating enterprise

relations, better transmitting information, supervising a series of exhibition activities, improving the market environment in the industry, standardizing the market order, and strengthening the industry self-discipline, so as to enable the association to better play the supplementary function of government management.

Exhibition tourism association should periodically collect information of enterprises' development situation, and promote exchanges and cooperation between the enterprises and information exchange, cooperate with government to set up the annual exhibition decoration plan, avoid waste of resources. The association should actively absorb advanced exhibition experience inland and abroad, provide relevant training for enterprises on a regular basis, and improve the professional ability and innovation ability of exhibition enterprises. The association should also conduct reasonable supervision, actively participate in the exhibition activities of enterprises, find and point out the shortcomings of exhibition enterprises in time, and help enterprises organize exhibition in a more standardized and orderly way.

#### **4.1.3 Companies to cooperate**

Private exhibition enterprises and small exhibition companies should be closely united under the leadership of state-owned exhibition enterprises to establish a group business model. In this exhibition industry collective, state-owned exhibition enterprises are the main body, other enterprises are limbs. State-owned exhibition enterprises should actively integrate enterprise resources in the industry, form scale effect and resource sharing, and avoid vicious competition and copycat behavior. It also can promote positive competition at the same time, promote the overall profits of exhibition industry in Wuhan, in the orderly development of private enterprise in has brought more and more high quality profit opportunities, can better for income generation in Wuhan, can better conform Wuhan exhibition brand image, create Wuhan exhibition enterprise image.

### **4.2 Build individual brands**

#### **4.2.1 Make long-term plans**

The establishment of Wuhan exhibition brand must give full play to the macro-control role of the Wuhan government and the organization and coordination role of the exhibition industry association, extensively collect information on various conditions of Wuhan exhibition development, and organize professionals to make development plans. The association should take the lead in guiding and actively coordinating to make the whole industry actively participate in the brand building of Wuhan exhibition. At the same time, the government should promote the integration between other industries and exhibition industry, vigorously support the building of exhibition brand, and comprehensively improve the image of Wuhan exhibition tourism.

#### **4.2.2 Create special themes**

In order to build Wuhan exhibition brand, it is necessary to combine the advantageous industries and exhibition industry of Wuhan closely, make the exhibition of relevant industries bigger and stronger, and constantly strengthen the planning and marketing to highlight the characteristics of Wuhan, and quickly build the brand awareness of Wuhan exhibition through the brand exhibition of industry characteristics.

#### **4.2.3 Clear image positioning**

The brand image positioning of the exhibition embodies the cultural connotation of the exhibition, including the purpose, industrial significance, values and other aspects of the exhibition, which is reflected in the whole process of the exhibition. To clarify the image positioning of the exhibition, that is, the exhibition's publicity planning, venue layout, product display, project planning, service process and other aspects are carried out comprehensively around the exhibition theme, highlighting the exhibition theme and personalized. The more distinct the exhibition theme is, the more prominent the cultural connotation of the exhibition will be, which will make its image positioning clearer and brand personality more obvious.

#### **4.2.4 Strengthen brand communication**

Strengthening the communication of exhibition brand is based on the strong brand awareness of exhibition participants. Only when the operators, organizers and participants of the exhibition have a strong brand awareness, can the exhibition service highlight the brand characteristics everywhere, and make the brand image better spread to visitors. In addition, we should make clear the needs of customers, segment the market, adopt different marketing strategies for different groups, and make full use of the Internet platform for exhibition promotion and marketing, so as to make the exhibition brand deeply popular.

#### **4.3 Collaborate with other organizations**

To accelerate the development pace of exhibition industry and realize the revitalization of Wuhan exhibition industry, Wuhan can actively seek cooperation between domestic and foreign exhibition organizations.

In the process of forming Wuhan exhibition brands of prophase work, may be appropriately employ experienced management team, both at home and abroad cooperation with local enterprises, combining advanced experience and the actual situation in Wuhan, quickly boost Wuhan exhibition organizing ability and service level.

Wuhan government should actively encourage and support Wuhan exhibition enterprises and high-tech enterprises to actively participate in international large-scale exhibition, promote the brand awareness of Wuhan enterprises, learn from foreign excellent exhibition experience, bring the successful experience back to Wuhan, and constantly promote the improvement of the overall organization and management level of Wuhan exhibition industry and the comprehensive quality of practitioners.

#### **4.4 Improve service**

##### **4.4.1 Pre-exhibition service**

Pre-exhibition service mainly focuses on publicity and marketing. Wuhan must also make full use of Internet resources and do a good job in publicity and marketing. Exhibition industry can establish unified and centralized portal websites or publish information on new media platforms, so that tourists in need can get relevant information more conveniently. It can also make use of live broadcast, a new way of publicity, to let more people know about the exhibition products information and the exhibition organization model, and cultivate the public's interest in exhibition tourism. Through a series of network publicity methods, people will leave a distinct image of Wuhan exhibition tourism in their mind, and the influence and competitiveness of Wuhan exhibition industry will also continue to improve.

##### **4.4.2 Service during exhibition**

Exhibition is not only a good marketing platform for exhibitors, but also an important place for visitors to obtain relevant information about products. In addition to paying attention to the experience of exhibitors, exhibition services should also pay attention to the experience of visitors, thus forming a virtuous circle, that is, exhibition services attract visitors and visitors attract exhibitors. To establish a standardized management team, training the employees service consciousness. When formulating service procedures and programs, the organization should take into account the diverse special needs of different exhibitors from domestic and international regions, and try to be more considerate.

##### **4.4.3 Service after exhibition**

It is important to collect the true evaluation of service quality from exhibitors and visitors after an exhibition. The evaluation of the exhibition service and the service on the exhibition site promote

each other. Exhibition organizers only collected the evaluation of the true, accurate, to the success of the exhibition held a comprehensive assessment, advantages and disadvantages, to find its improvements, continuously improve the problems of organization and management, continuously improve the quality of exhibition and exhibition of sustainable development.

#### **4.5 Emphasis on talent training**

At this stage, we can introduce talents from other countries or cities with better development of exhibitions and tourism, help enterprises to establish professional management and service teams, accumulate experience in establishing large-scale exhibitions, and achieve a good start for the comprehensive revitalization of Wuhan exhibition tourism. .

In the long run, Wuhan should implement an active policy to train professionals in exhibition tourism. Wuhan Municipal Government should actively lead colleges and universities to set up convention and exhibition majors, and train professional orientation talents. Attaching importance to the internationalized advanced theoretical knowledge learning, it also promotes the joint training mode of creating industry associations and private enterprises, so that professional students can participate in the convention and exhibition organization practice before they graduate, and better accumulate relevant practical experience.

Wuhan Municipal Government and industry associations should also actively organize personnel to go abroad to participate in professional exhibitions or to enter the university to learn advanced experience in exhibition organization. These personnel can be training specialists in the association or excellent reserve talents in the enterprise. After the return of their studies, they can organize training classes in the industry, so that the industry can set off a wave of learning advanced experience and promote the development of the industry towards professionalism and advanced.

#### **4.6 Combine with tourism resources**

Wuhan has abundant tourism resources, but on the whole, the combination of tourism and exhibition industry is not close enough. In the development of exhibition tourism in Wuhan, we should pay more attention to the combination of exhibition industry and tourism.

##### **4.6.1 Focus on promoting tourism resources**

In the exhibition held in the early, exhibition organizers in addition to vigorously promote the industry, product, exhibition-related information, should also be efforts to promote tourism resources in Wuhan, Chu customs, to deepen the understanding of the people participating in Wuhan and Hubei to enhance the passion of exhibitors for travel in Wuhan.

##### **4.6.2 Develop a combined tourism plan**

Exhibition organizers can cooperate with travel agencies and scenic spots. On the basis of fully considering the needs of exhibitors and visitors, organizers can develop a combined tourism program with the exhibition, and launch tourism products such as “Wuhan One-Day Tour”, “Wuhan Two-Day Tour” and “Hubei Province Tour” for exhibitors to choose. Exhibition organizers can also organize exhibitors to conduct group tours after the exhibition, provide more targeted travel services, and leave a better impression on Wuhan and Wuhan exhibition brands in the hearts of exhibitors.

##### **4.6.3 Implement incentive tourism policy**

Wuhan Municipal Government, the Exhibition Industry Association and the exhibition organization enterprises can unite the scenic spots, hotels, transportation, travel agencies and other industries to reduce the cost of organizing package tourists in Wuhan through bulk ordering. Meanwhile, Wuhan municipal government will subsidize part of the exhibition revenue exhibitors who conduct follow-up tour in Wuhan, so that exhibitors who can carry out tourism activities at a lower price. This series of incentive policies can make the participants' enthusiasm for tourism in Wuhan more abundant, and it is also conducive to stimulating the development of related industries and bringing greater economic benefits to Wuhan.



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