

Research on Cruise Products Based on the Integration Model of Cruise and Chinese Culture: A Case Study of Adora Magic City

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Abstract: Taking the Adora Magic City as an example, this paper explores the practical implementation and optimization paths of the “cruise and Chinese culture” integration model. By analyzing the presentation of cultural elements in its spatial design, themed activities, and catering services, the study identifies issues such as superficial cultural integration and insufficient innovation. It is proposed to deepen the integration by excavating traditional culture and leveraging digital technologies for immersive experiences, providing references for the differentiated development of domestic cruise brands.

Keywords: Cruise Industry, Chinese Culture, Integration Model, Adora Magic City, Cultural Empowerment.

1. Introduction

As global competition in the cruise industry intensifies, localization and differentiation have become pivotal for Chinese cruise enterprises to achieve breakthroughs. Adora Magic City, China’s first domestically built large-scale cruise ship, exemplifies the integration model of “cruise and Chinese culture,” offering significant demonstrative value. Existing studies predominantly focus on either cruise economy or cultural tourism in isolation, with limited exploration of deep integration models between the two.

From the perspective of cultural empowerment in product design, this paper employs spatial narrative theory to systematically analyze the presentation of cultural elements aboard Adora Magic City and their impact on tourist experiences. It reveals practical challenges such as superficial cultural integration and insufficient innovation. The study argues that only through the modern transformation of traditional cultural DNA and the immersive application of digital technologies can the dual enhancement of cultural and industrial values be achieved.

2. Theoretical Framework of the “Cruise and Chinese Culture” Integration Model

2.1 Interactive Relationship Between Cultural Integration and Industrial Upgrading

Cultural integration and industrial upgrading create a synergistic development momentum through mutual reinforcement. On one hand, cultural elements endow cruise products with uniqueness, enabling the industry to shift from homogeneous competition to differentiated development. For instance, integrating intangible cultural heritage crafts or local opera into cruise spatial design enhances product value while expanding cultural dissemination. On the other hand, industrial upgrading provides a modern platform for traditional cruise ships, as mobile cultural exhibition spaces, transcend geographical boundaries to reach broader audiences. Policy guidance plays a pivotal catalytic role: the national “Cultural Going Global” strategy and cruise industry support policies encourage enterprises to explore cultural

empowerment pathways, ultimately forming a virtuous cycle where cultural enhancement drives industrial competitiveness and industrial upgrading sustains cultural heritage preservation.

2.2 Path Analysis of Cultural Empowerment in Cruise Products

Cultural empowerment of cruise products operates through three interconnected dimensions. First, the physical dimension integrates traditional architectural elements into ship design—such as mortise-tenon joinery in public areas or blue-and-white porcelain motifs on hulls—to establish visual recognition and spatial coherence. Second, the activity dimension emphasizes participatory experiences, including workshops on ancient papermaking or traditional instrument performances, fostering deeper visitor engagement through hands-on interaction. Third, the service dimension embeds cultural narratives into operational details, exemplified by “24 Solar Terms” themed dining menus or Hanfu costume rentals, creating immersive scenarios that bridge daily services with heritage storytelling. Adora Magic City’s case underscores a critical insight: cultural empowerment must transcend symbolic gestures. Instead, it requires modern reinterpretation—such as digitally reconstructing historical landscapes or integrating augmented reality (AR) for dynamic engagement—to balance cultural authenticity with commercial viability, thereby achieving sustainable synergy between heritage preservation and industrial innovation.

3. Case Study of Adora Magic City

3.1 Rationale for Case Selection and Data Sources

Adora Magic City, China’s first independently designed and built large-scale cruise ship, serves as a benchmark for the “cruise and Chinese culture” integration model. The case was selected for three reasons: first, its systematic integration of cultural elements across spatial, activity, and service dimensions; second, its representativeness as a domestically produced vessel, offering valuable insights for local enterprises; third, the accessibility of public data and visitor feedback. Key data sources include enterprise cultural design

reports, 2023-2024 visitor experience surveys (N=500), on-site activity observations, and cultural tourism policy documents [1].

3.2 Presentation of Chinese Cultural Elements

Cultural expression aboard Adora Magic City adopts a multi-layered integration strategy spanning spatial design, themed activities, and dining services. In spatial design, traditional elements are reinterpreted through modern technology: public areas feature Suzhou Garden-inspired lattice window patterns, while theater stages combine Dunhuang flying apsaras murals with dynamic LED projections, creating a dialogue between heritage aesthetics and digital innovation. Themed activities emphasize experiential engagement, such as the “Maritime Silk Road” intangible cultural heritage markets, where visitors participate in cloisonné enamel workshops or AR-guided treasure hunts that digitally revive ancient trade routes. Dining services further embed cultural narratives by offering “24 Solar Terms” menus—like Qingming Festival green dumplings served with Longjing tea on Song Dynasty-style porcelain — while crew uniforms utilize gambiered Guangdong gauze fabric printed with regional dialect motifs, subtly weaving local identity into daily operations. This layered approach transforms passive cultural display into interactive storytelling, bridging historical continuity with contemporary relevance [2].

3.3 Impact of Cultural Integration on Visitor Experience

The cultural integration strategy aboard Adora Magic City has generated measurable impacts on visitor perceptions and behaviors, though findings reveal a dual-edged influence requiring nuanced interpretation. Quantitative surveys (N=500) demonstrate that cultural elements significantly enhance the cruise’s uniqueness: 78% of respondents reported strengthened cultural immersion through architectural symbolism in public spaces, while 65% expressed satisfaction with hands-on workshops like cloisonné enamel crafting. Qualitative observations further revealed that dynamic LED projections of Dunhuang murals in the theater created spontaneous photo-sharing behaviors among 83% of visitors, indicating successful visual storytelling.

However, the data highlighted a demographic divide in engagement preferences. Young adults (18-35) demonstrated high interaction rates (82%) with AR navigation games that digitally reconstructed ancient maritime routes, whereas older visitors (more than 50 years old) showed marked preference (76%) for structured cultural lectures on solar terms, leading to uneven crowd distribution across activity zones. This generational gap extended to information processing: while digital-native tourists actively scanned QR codes for augmented content, 68% of seniors relied on printed materials, creating parallel experience tracks.

A critical limitation emerged in dining services: though “24 Solar Terms” menus aesthetically linked cuisine to heritage, 59% of visitors failed to grasp deeper cultural meanings due to passive text-based descriptions. This aligns with educational psychology principles, where multimodal communication (e.g., verbal explanation and visual aids) enhances knowledge retention compared to unidimensional text. Similarly, crew

uniforms featuring regional dialect patterns, while visually authentic, lacked contextual signage, leaving 41% of non-local Chinese visitors uncertain about their symbolic significance [3].

The findings suggest that while cultural integration effectively differentiates Adora Magic City in a competitive market, its implementation requires refined audience segmentation. Younger tourists respond to gamified, tech-mediated experiences, while older demographics favor curated educational formats. To bridge this gap, hybrid approaches — such as AR-guided tours with optional live commentary — could harmonize digital innovation with traditional pedagogy. Additionally, menu design would benefit from interactive elements like QR code-triggered animations explaining solar term origins, transforming passive dining into active cultural learning. Ultimately, the case underscores that effective cultural fusion demands balancing authenticity with accessibility, ensuring heritage narratives resonate across generational and technological divides [4].

4. Challenges and Optimization Strategies for Cultural Integration Models

4.1 Current Issues: Superficial Integration and Lack of Innovation

The cruise industry’s cultural integration practices face two interlinked challenges: the superficial treatment of cultural elements and the homogenization of innovative formats. Many projects reduce heritage symbols to decorative accessories—such as hanging calligraphy scrolls or playing guzheng music—without contextualizing their historical significance or philosophical foundations. This “hollow cultural representation” leaves tourists with fragmented impressions rather than meaningful connections. Meanwhile, innovation remains constrained to repetitive formats: intangible heritage activities often focus on basic crafts like paper-cutting, while digital tools like AR are limited to rudimentary navigation aids, lacking immersive storytelling tailored to cruise environments. A case in point is a multinational cruise line’s “Chinese Night,” where dragon-pattern carpets and lantern decorations coexist with Western cabaret performances, creating thematic disjointedness. Furthermore, cultural content integration with cruise functions lacks systemic design [5]. For example, solar term-themed dining menus merely relabel dishes without incorporating agrarian knowledge or wellness philosophies, undermining both educational depth and commercial potential.

4.2 Countermeasures: Deep Excavation and Technological Empowerment

To address superficial cultural integration, a trinity integration mechanism must be established. This framework operates across three interconnected layers: the Cultural Decoding Layer employs academic research to distill the philosophical essence embedded in symbols (e.g., deriving the Confucian concept of “harmony between heaven and humanity” from blue-and-white porcelain patterns); the Technological Translation Layer utilizes 3D modeling and holographic projection to reconstruct historical contexts (e.g., virtually

rebuilding the interior of Zheng He's treasure ships); and the Experiential Design Layer develops multimodal interactive projects, such as puzzle-solving games integrated with navigation logs from ancient voyages [6].

In terms of technological empowerment, the metaverse concept can be introduced to create "maritime cultural pods," where tourists use VR devices to engage in digital collectible creation, transforming intangible heritage skills into tradable NFT artworks—a strategy that simultaneously enhances participation and expands commercial pathways. For activity innovation, a live-action cultural role-playing (LARP) format could be adopted, such as the "Silk Road Merchant Challenge," requiring passengers to apply celestial navigation knowledge or diplomatic strategies to complete trade missions, thereby embedding cultural learning within gamified mechanics.

Concurrently, a dynamic evaluation system should quantify cultural resonance by analyzing user-generated content (UGC)—including short videos and hand-drawn maps—to measure engagement levels. Leveraging big data analytics, this system enables real-time refinement of content delivery. Ultimately, these efforts coalesce into a closed-loop system of "deep excavation → tech conversion → experiential innovation → effect feedback," fostering sustainable synergy between cultural preservation and industrial profitability.

5. Conclusions

This study examines the cultural integration practices of the Adora Magic City cruise ship, focusing on its innovative approaches and existing challenges. The case analysis reveals three key implementation dimensions: symbolic translation in spatial design (e.g., Suzhou Garden latticework combined with Dunhuang murals via LED projections), immersive storytelling in themed activities (e.g., AR-guided Maritime Silk Road treasure hunts), and cultural recontextualization in dining services (e.g., "24 Solar Terms" menus paired with regional dialect-patterned uniforms). These strategies effectively enhanced cultural immersion and differentiated visitor experiences, though superficial integration and innovation bottlenecks persist—such as repetitive intangible heritage workshops and underutilized digital tools.

To address these issues, the paper proposes a three-pronged optimization framework: deep cultural excavation through academic decoding of symbolic meanings, technological empowerment via holographic reconstructions and metaverse-based NFT creation, and dynamic evaluation using UGC analytics. This model emphasizes balancing authenticity, technological relevance, and experiential innovation. For instance, live-action role-playing games merging celestial navigation with trade diplomacy demonstrate how gamification can deepen cultural learning.

The findings contribute a replicable blueprint for the cruise industry, highlighting the need for systematic integration of cultural heritage with modern leisure paradigms. Future research could explore cross-media narrative design and AI-generated content (AIGC) to further bridge historical continuity and contemporary engagement.

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