

Development of Cultural and Creative Products for the 80th Anniversary of North China University of Technology

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Abstract: *This paper focuses on the 80th anniversary of North China University of Technology and employs symbolic translation to convey the university's spirit and historical legacy. Centered on the design of cultural products in higher education, it integrates academic research with case-study analysis. The aim is to develop practical design solutions for the anniversary celebrations, which are intended to strengthen the connection between students, alumni, and campus culture.*

Keywords: North China University of Technology, 80th anniversary, Cultural product design, Campus culture.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

University anniversaries are significant milestones that demonstrate institutional growth, preserve history, and foster community cohesion. Cultural products play a vital role in these celebrations by showcasing campus culture and strengthening collective identity. Established in 1946 and renamed in 1985, North China University of Technology (NCUT) has developed a focus on engineering, with particular strengths in smart transportation and advanced manufacturing. Its upcoming 80th anniversary in 2026 presents a valuable opportunity to promote its unique culture, inspire innovative designs, and further disseminate the university's spirit [1].

1.2 Research Purpose and Significance

The anniversary products are designed to embody NCUT's motto, "Diligence in Learning, Integrity in Character," and tradition of "Serving the Nation Through Industry." Through symbolic translation, these abstract values are made visually tangible. The designs transform practical items into vessels of memory, strengthening the emotional bond between alumni and their alma mater. By seamlessly integrating technology with culture, these products establish a replicable model for university cultural branding [2].

1.3 Research Methods

This study employs a multifaceted research approach. It begins with a comprehensive review of literature on cultural and creative product design to establish a theoretical foundation. Subsequently, it analyzes successful design cases from other universities to draw practical insights [3]. Field visits to NCUT are conducted to gain a firsthand understanding of campus symbols and user needs. Finally, a comprehensive design plan is developed, integrating theoretical knowledge with practical application to ensure the final products are both meaningful and functional.

2. Exploring Campus Culture and Symbols

2.1 Historical Elements

With an eighty-year history, NCUT is deeply rooted in the spirit of "Serving the Nation Through Industry." Its pivotal moments are captured in precious archival photographs and records. In the 1980s, the esteemed Comrade Fang Yi personally inscribed the university's name. The bold, vigorous strokes of his calligraphy embody profound support and an enduring spirit. These significant historical elements can be skillfully integrated into product designs to preserve and pass on these cherished memories.

2.2 Spatial Landscape Elements

The university campus holds three cherished landmarks, each steeped in profound emotional significance. The iconic Yuxiu Garden and Yuxiu Gate (Figures 1 and 2) are warmly regarded by both students and faculty as a symbolic "home." The large rock at the South Gate (Figure 3), etched with youthful memories, is a favorite spot for student photographs. Towering tall, the School Motto Tree (Figure 4) embodies the university's enduring spirit. These sites have become vital emotional symbols, silently witnessing the university's journey, safeguarding its most precious memories, and nurturing a deep sense of belonging for all.

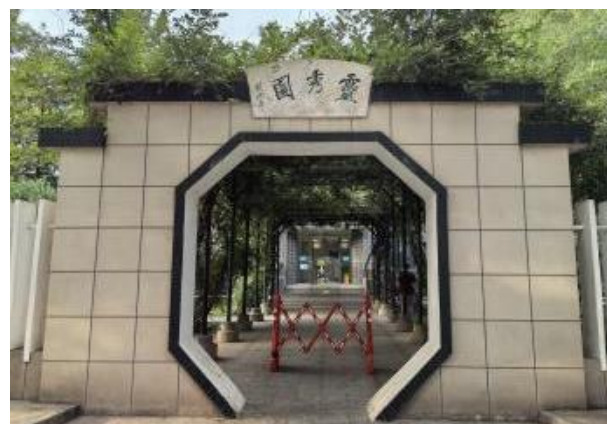


Figure 1: Yuxiu Gate



Figure 2: Yuxiu Square



Figure 3: The Big Stone at the South Gate



Figure 4: The School Motto Tree

2.3 Visual Identity Elements

As the core of cultural and creative design, the school logo features a dignified, solemn standard color. The “NCUT” insignia embodies understated elegance, while the school motto font stands bold and powerful. These elements constitute the foundational pillars of our Visual Identity system, endowing cultural and creative products with a uniquely solemn campus character. Our campus scenery transforms with the seasons: spring’s cherry blossoms burst into bloom, summer’s lush shade provides cool respite, autumn’s fiery maple leaves set the campus ablaze, and winter blankets the grounds in serene snow. The delicate fragrance of white magnolias lingers throughout. This profound integration of natural beauty and campus culture infuses our cultural and creative products with both structured elegance

and vibrant charm. These thoughtful items eloquently showcase the university’s distinctive taste, profound connotation, and enduring appeal.

2.4 Life Memory Elements

Campus life serves as a constant wellspring of creative inspiration. The simple student uniforms and well-used backpacks stand as enduring emblems of campus identity, while the signature dishes in the faculty and student canteen evoke flavorful memories. The playful “NCUT Cats,” roaming freely, are transformed into cherished “mobile emotional symbols” within designers’ creations. These life-inspired elements resonate deeply, stirring collective memory. They transform cultural and creative products beyond mere visual images; they become emotional containers imbued with the warmth of daily life and the shared experiences of the NCUT community.

3. Target Group Demand Analysis and Design Positioning

3.1 Portraits of Core Target Groups

3.1.1 Current Students

Young students prioritize campus life—both classes and social experiences. They gravitate toward practicality and campus adaptability, distinct from professionals focused on business texture or families seeking durability. This group craves personalized expression and a sense of belonging; they actively seek exclusive designs and shun mass-market uniformity. Limited budgets make them highly value-conscious, demanding strong cost-effectiveness and rejecting high premiums. They embrace novelty, drawn to creative and technologically innovative products, unlike mature groups who “value substance over gimmicks.” Campus cultural and creative products answer these needs: rooted in practicality, centered on culture, they breathe new life into everyday items, blending cost-effectiveness, functional aesthetics, and youthful personality.

3.1.2 Alumni

Alumni now seek more than mere practicality or fleeting fashion in their collections. They embrace campus memories as the core and emotional bonds as the link, actively searching for items that carry the distinct marks of their campus years. Deeply cherished is the emotional value and exclusive significance these souvenirs hold. As time passes and nostalgia for campus life deepens, alumni yearn to rekindle memories and fortify their sense of identity through these tangible connections. They gravitate towards collections imbued with historical heritage and scarcity—handcrafted silver school emblems, delicate rice paper thread-bound books, and coveted limited-edition badges—deliberately avoiding commonplace, mass-produced items. Furthermore, a powerful demand exists for exclusive customization, such as imprinting graduation photos or engraving surnames, to render each souvenir uniquely personal. This distinct preference sets them apart from groups favoring standardized products. These souvenirs transcend mere objects; they become vital emotional bonds, potent emblems of identity

that allow alumni to vividly relive their campus time, transforming into their eternal emotional sustenance.

3.2 Design Positioning

For distinct customer groups, we craft bespoke designs to forge clear, comprehensive plans. Our approach passionately embraces the concept: “Forging the Original Aspiration of Education with 80 Years of Industrial Heritage.” We masterfully weave historical legacy with modern innovation: reimagining industrial heritage through trendy factory elements, and transforming the original aspiration of education into emotional resonance via iconic landscapes. We preserve traditional depth while boldly infusing contemporary style. Our solutions meet students’ practical needs while offering high-end customization. Ultimately, we converge cultural richness, functional practicality, and artistic allure to sculpt a multi-dimensional design — a seamless fusion of history and cutting-edge fashion.

4. Design of the 80th Anniversary Cultural and Creative Product System

4.1 School Emblem Badge

The NCUT badge (Figure 5) takes “color” as its core design language, fashioning a wearable symbol rich in both visual appeal and spiritual depth. Its heart features the primary “intertwined gold and red” palette. The warm gold badge, crafted with mirror polishing technology, possesses a substantial texture and radiant luster. The vibrant red tassel stands intense and solemn, forming a harmonious visual balance of cool and warm tones with the gold. An ingenious design graces the badge’s edge: it gradually transitions into an autumn golden brown near the gold and a spring bright yellow near the red tassel. The back blends light blue and pure white. These subtle color gradients elegantly outline the concept of “wearable four seasons,” allowing one to sense the campus’s changing seasons with a simple flip. The overall color scheme adheres to the principle of “seeking harmony in contrast and change in unity.” The red tassel and gold badge coexist harmoniously, echoing each other through their shared metallic sheen, while the four-season gradient adds profound richness to the central theme.

This design transcends mere color combination (Figure 6). It deeply integrates the traditional color spectrum of the “Jiezi Garden Painting Manual” with modern color psychology. Every hue becomes a voice articulating NCUT’s spirit, achieving the resonant effect of “expressing emotions and conveying spirit.” Warm gold embodies the accumulation of 80 years of academic heritage, adhering steadfastly to the unchanging ideal of “Strengthening the School through Science and Technology” and hinting at the bountiful harvest of “autumn fruits.” Vibrant red resonates with heartfelt familial affection. Like “summer night sparks igniting the light of knowledge,” it conveys the dynamic power of youth and progress. The four-season colors metaphorically reflect the serene calm of “autumn forests,” the bursting vitality of “white magnolias,” the crystalline clarity of “summer sea,” and the resilient perseverance of “winter plum blossoms.” The badge is not just a visual artifact; it is a spiritual totem, bearing the campus spirit and the passage of time. Worn upon the

chest, it quietly etches this profound identity into daily life.



Figure 5: Badge Design



Figure 6: Clothing Color Source

4.2 Anniversary T-shirt Design

“Form” embodies the visual translation of cultural DNA. This anniversary T-shirt (Figure 7) wields lines as brushes and contours as ink, distilling NCUT’s landmarks, four seasons, and enduring spirit into a wearable “mobile painting.” It perfectly echoes the design’s original aspiration: “establishing images to express meanings.”

Rooted in the “80” as its temporal and spatial anchor, the design distills the solemnity of the school gate, the orderly rhythm of teaching buildings, and the profound weight of the library into elegant outlines as its foundation. This tangible representation symbolizes the university’s 80-year journey, giving physical form to the spirit of “Uphold Virtue and Encourage Learning.” Gracefully cascading wisteria flower waterfalls adorn the left side, soft petals embracing strong architectural lines in a dance of softness and rigidity; the buildings signify the foundation of “upholding tradition,” while the wisteria bursts with the vitality of “innovation.” Together, they weave a visual footnote for “upholding tradition and innovating.” On the right, pristine white magnolias embrace the school motto stone; the motto emerges subtly from the petals, like the profound, implicit, yet steadfast sedimentation of educational purpose. “Four-season flowers” are artfully scattered: vibrant tulips herald spring’s energy, lush hydrangeas mirror summer’s abundance, resilient chrysanthemums resonate with autumn’s tranquility, and proud plum blossoms embody winter’s integrity. Concealed within the building outlines through flat design, they create a temporal narrative of “one thing per season, one

memory per year,” gently recalling youthful memories woven through the campus seasons. School emblem elements—the gold badge and the flowing red flag tassel—are seamlessly integrated into corners with linear artistry. The gold badge’s outline harmonizes with the overhanging eaves, while the tassel’s dynamic energy merges with the wisteria waterfall’s fluidity, adding heartfelt belonging without disrupting the visual harmony. This exemplifies the meticulous ingenuity of “meaning hidden in form, form expressing meaning.” The T-shirt transforms into a vessel carrying the campus spirit and culture. Wearing it feels like holding NCUT’s 80-year legacy close to the heart.



Figure 7: Anniversary T-shirt



Figure 8: Cultural Bookmark



Figure 9: Cultural Bookmark

4.3 Cultural Bookmark

“Texture” embodies cultural value. These NCUT bookmarks (Figures 8 and 9) transform the university’s time and ingenuity into tangible memories through exquisite materials and craftsmanship, achieving a profound “spirit conveyed through touch.”

The bookmark’s “texture” manifests in its “harmonious fusion of culture and quality.” The beech wood body, bearing grain like ancient rings, possesses a substantial heft. This woodgrain echoes educational ideals, containing the growth marks of students and stories woven through four seasons. A contrasting metal strip along the edge creates a striking interplay, enhancing durability while symbolizing perseverance – a perfect balance of softness and strength.

Craftsmanship breathes soul into this “texture.” The front features the laser-engraved school motto, seamlessly integrated with the wood’s natural pattern; its subtle rise and fall ripples beneath the fingertips like time’s own mark. The reverse showcases screen-printed white magnolia patterns – delicate lines and soft hues that echo campus vistas while preserving the wood’s inherent warmth. A wisteria magnetic pendant, arcing gracefully at the top, allows the piece to hang from pages or serve as a standalone ornament, realizing versatile utility.

This “texture” imbues cultural memories with palpable warmth: the beech wood’s comforting solidity feels like cradling fragments of campus life; tracing the school motto prompts reflection on founding aspirations; admiring the magnolia blossom becomes reuniting with halcyon days. Transcending mere utility, this “touchable cultural memory” becomes a key held in the palm, unlocking NCUT’s enduring legacy – the wisdom of four seasons coursing through each touch.

5. Operation and Promotion Strategies and Implementation Guarantee

5.1 Online and Offline Combined Sales

During the school anniversary, the school will unveil a “Yuxiu Feelings” cultural and creative experience store, crafting an immersive shopping space featuring interactive check-in zones and customized trial experiences. Concurrently, we will establish a temporary post office to offer postcard mailing and commemorative postmark services, fostering a vibrant campus atmosphere. Online, we will launch an exclusive mall and orchestrate a series of pre-heating promotional activities for the “Anniversary Countdown.” Design stories and user review videos will be released via the WeChat official account, forging a comprehensive marketing closed loop.

5.2 User Co-creation and Communication

Leveraging our established campus cultural and creative design competition model, we will open streamlined submission channels for teachers and students. We will actively promote the mass production of high-quality works, enabling participants to embody both roles: “I am the designer

and the user.” Concurrently, we will launch the “My NCUT Memories” story collection campaign, inviting users to share their campus life experiences, learning journeys, and other narratives intrinsically linked to our cultural products. This initiative will foster a cycle where user-generated content fuels secondary communication, creating a powerful closed loop of emotional resonance, collaborative content creation, and organic word-of-mouth promotion. Ultimately, we aim to transform our cultural and creative products into a living collective memory museum for our alumni.

6. Conclusion and Outlook

6.1 Research Conclusion

Based on NCUT’s 80th-anniversary backdrop, this research employs a synthesis of literature review, case analysis, and on-site investigation. It meticulously encompasses the entire journey — from cultural excavation and design implementation to promotion and communication — constructing a replicable design paradigm for anniversary cultural and creative products. We distill four core cultural genes: historical tradition, spatial landscape, visual identity, and life memory, forming the bedrock of our creative design. Through systematic analysis of student, alumni, and other user needs, we craft a layered, precise positioning strategy: forging tech-savvy, fashionable cultural products for students, while customizing high-end commemorative collections for alumni. Representative creations like school emblem badges and anniversary T-shirts seamlessly integrate the school motto’s spirit and traditional core through flat design translation. These products carry profound cultural resonance while balancing practicality and artistic elegance.[4] Ultimately, symbolic translation transforms abstract concepts into tangible visual language, realizing the cultural spirit’s visual expression. Layered design precisely targets diverse needs, establishing an actionable development framework. This research offers a systematic cultural and creative solution for the anniversary, delivering a paradigm rich in theoretical guidance and practical value for university cultural and creative development.

6.2 Future Outlook

The enduring vitality of future anniversary cultural and creative products hinges on relentless innovation and the expansion of their application scenes. Based on the campus theme post office, the school can undertake cross-border “cultural and creative products and postal services” ecological practices. It can host “NCUT Memories” themed stamp exhibitions during daily life and festive occasions, regularly unveiling limited-edition commemorative postal products for the public, thereby deepening the cultural resonance and emotional connection value of these creations. We can also pioneer the introduction of digital technologies (like AR/VR) to develop dynamic digital cultural and creative products. By breathing digital life into existing symbols, we can craft immersive experiences—such as virtual school history museums and AR campus landscape postcards. This approach seeks a dual-track innovative development path for both “physical and digital cultural and creative products”. It transforms campus culture from a tangible carrier into a boundless virtual space, allowing the “NCUT spirit,” forged

over 80 years of history, to ride the digital wave. In this new era, it will continue to inspire young people to dedicate their youth to national construction, truly making history tangible, culture immersive, and spirit enduring.

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