# An Overview of the Development and Status of Theater Brand Management in China

2023, Vol.4 No.3
© Economics & Management Review 2023
DOI: 10.37420/j.emr.2023.07
https://masonpublish.org

**Xun Liu, Zhen Li**
**PATHUMTHANI UNIVERSITY, THAILAND**

## Abstract

*Theater management marketing has its own unique rules. As a new type of business, theater marketing in accordance with the purely commercial mode of operation is often a failure, we must explore a new model in line with the laws of theater management. From the perspective of consumer experience, theater art can bring unique experience for consumers, and this experience can form a unique brand of the theater. This paper summarizes and analyzes the development and current situation of Chinese theater brand management through literature review. It puts forward the view that accurate brand positioning and scientific marketing strategy supported by data have become the core point of individual marketing for theaters.*

## Keywords

*Theater; Chinese theater; Theater branding; Theater management*

## 1. Introduction

A theater, literally, is a place to watch a play. Broadly speaking, a place that has both a stage and an auditorium is called a theater. According to Christopher Balme's definition, theater can include: a building, an activity, an institution and an art form (Geng, 2011). The theatre studied in this paper focuses more on the management rules and structure of an organization than on the place where performing arts are performed (a specific building). Such management rules and organizational structure are regarded as the management status of the theatre.

People's understanding of the theater is a process from shallow to deep, from single to multiple. There are two main clues to people's understanding of the theater: the functional setting of the theater and the artistic status of the theater. Today, when theaters have become urban cultural landmarks, public cultural service platforms, and even blossomed as channels for cultural consumption, China's theaters have a sufficiently complete system. However, at the same time, theaters are still facing a serious test. A small number of theaters are facing the problem of imbalance in development, which is unable to weigh the quality and efficiency, while a large number of theaters are caught in the dilemma of "quality and efficiency".

Precise brand positioning and scientific marketing strategies supported by data have become the core points of individual theater marketing. The marketing tactics adopted by theaters are also constantly optimized and changed due to brand positioning, crowd consumption ability, market environment and other factors. This paper analyzes and researches the brand management of Chinese theaters from the perspective of an overview.

# 2. Theory of Theater Management Overview

In traditional Chinese culture, there is no word for "theater", only names such as "stage" and "theater". The original meaning of the word "theater" is a place to watch a play, but in a broader sense, a place with both a stage and an auditorium is called a theater (Qiu Kunliang and Zhan Huideng, 1998). According to Christopher Balme's definition, theater can include: a building, an activity, an institution, and an art form (Geng, 2011). The so-called theatre in this study focuses more on the management rules and structure as an organization, in addition to a performance venue for performing arts (a specific building). Such management rules and organizational structure are regarded as the management status of the theatre.

## 2.1 Origins and Development of the Theater

2.1.1 The origin and development of traditional Chinese theater

The traditional Chinese theater originated from rituals and ceremonies, often combined with temples, and is also known as the "temple theater system". The study of the traditional Chinese temple theater is often closely related to the origins of opera, song, poetry, dance, and music. The stage is an architectural form and concept that has since evolved out of the need for spectatorship. The so-called "stage" is a raised ground performance venue, with a high mound of earth and open air without a roof, also known as "terrace". This form of "terrace" is the name and style of performance venues that have been widely spread everywhere in China from ancient times to the present. Until today, this kind of open-air performance place can still be seen in some rural markets, and farmers call it "earthen theater" (Xue Linping, 2009). The open-air form has always been one of the basic forms of Chinese temple theater.

Following the "terrace", in order not to be affected by the weather, to improve and beautify the performance environment, the temple built in the pavilion type theater building originated in the Northern Song Dynasty. Opera performances in the Qing Dynasty reached the peak of development, tended to be frequent and popular. Types of theater in the Qing Dynasty social environment and the prosperity of the art of opera in the context of innovation, ancestral halls, halls, private, royal, etc. have appeared in the theater. The temple color was diluted or even disappeared, while the performance function was further emphasized and became a single-function performance venue.

2.1.2 Modern Western Commercial Theater

Commercial theaters, as the name implies, are mainly operated on a commercial basis, and appeared as early as the early 1900s, but did not appear in large numbers until after World War II due to the need for large amounts of construction funds.

The survival and maintenance of commercial theatre faced strong financial pressure and required large audience support, largely driving the civilianization of theatre and theatre architecture. But over-commercialization soon plunged the theatre into a crisis: performances were overly pleasing to the audience, and bent towards exaggeration; in the design of theatre buildings, over-commercialization reduced the relationship between audience and actors to a subordinate one of commercial interests. Theater companies in order to reduce the risk of performance losses, more and more reluctant to perform in commercial theaters, reducing the use of the theater; at the same time, in the commercial theater performance of the theater companies have to raise ticket prices. The vicious circle makes the audience even more reluctant to go into the theater to watch the

performance. Many touring groups prefer to perform in university theaters or even high school theaters with poor hardware facilities to reduce costs.

In addition to the expensive design and construction costs, the long-term operating costs of the theater are also very high. Theater management models that rely exclusively on commercial operations are in decline, and there are few purely commercial theaters left. More than half of the commercial theaters in the United States have disappeared in the past forty years. Most of the theaters that have survived have relied on outside support, such as some form of government funding during the investment phase or early years of operation.

## 2.2 Overview of Theater Marketing Theories

2.2.1 Consumer Behavioral Characteristics

Consumers exhibit certain psychological characteristics and behavioral patterns in the process of acquiring, using, consuming, and disposing of products or services to satisfy their needs in life.The Theory of Rational Acts (TRA) by Ajzen and Fish- bein (1977) suggests that consumers' final behaviors are influenced by their motives for behavior and access to information, and that they act in ways that maximize their own profitability and satisfy the needs of others. Engel and Blackwell et al. (1986) jointly proposed a classical model of consumer behavior that includes variables such as purchase motives, evaluation criteria, lifestyle and information influence.Beckett (2012) et al. argued that consumers need to spend a great deal of time and effort in information gathering in order to make rational choices, so it is very difficult for them to make fully rational and positive decisions, but rather reduce uncertainty by building relationships.Berg (2011) et al. argue that with big data mining can enable business managers to better understand consumer behavior. Consumer behavior should be the precursor to marketing, and consumers and their behavior must be fully understood to grasp the intrinsic psychological factors of consumer needs, motivation, personality, attitudes, and learning and their influences in order to carry out effective marketing.

2.2.2 Consumption Characteristics of Theater Audiences

Consumers have different resources at their disposal and different motivations for purchasing. Most of the research on arts demand and audiences can only provide theater managers with partial demographic characterizations, similar to the fact that the audience is mainly higher income, well educated, and has a larger proportion of female than male patrons. These characteristics are not sufficient for theater managers to conduct theater branding (Garber et al., 2000). These studies do not truly reflect the needs of arts organization audiences. Moreover, the motivations for audience attendance are complex, and it is more difficult to accurately and comprehensively capture the behaviors and attitudes of theater patrons. In addition, external factors can have a significant impact on consumer behavior, such as culture, ethics, values, reference groups and family.

Commercial marketing refers to all the behaviors that are directed towards satisfying consumer needs and wishes by various means of transactions (Dekker et al., 1995). Art marketing is a comprehensive management process that focuses on the fulfillment of relationships with consumers through artwork (Hill et al., 2003). While both commercial marketing and art marketing are directed towards satisfying consumer wants and needs, there are clear differences between the two. The traditional marketing model is centered on the existing needs of the consumer, and the market is both the beginning and the end of the application of marketing tools. Art marketing, on the other hand, recognizes that the artwork is the most important element of marketing behavior and plays a key role in determining other marketing factors (Hill et al., 2003).

The untouchability of the performing arts makes the practice of marketing challenging. A product marketed in the theater, such as a comedy or ballet performance, is an experiential product that the consumer must first experience in order to know whether he likes it or not (Caves, 2000). This attribute is an integral part of the artifact and the consumption of it, and is also based on the fact that services are produced and consumed simultaneously. Moreover, experiential goods are perishable, as unsold tickets to a performance on a given date are a permanent loss of income opportunity (Hill et al., 2003). Consumers who purchase experiential goods are not sure of the experience they will receive from the goods. This uncertainty leads consumers to rely on the opinions of others who have had previous consumer experiences or art critics or fellow artists (Caves, 2000).

Since consumer emotions and empirical descriptions of motivation play a very important role in satisfaction with a theatrical or concert performance (Addis and Holbrook, 2001), the goal of theatre marketing is to manage and influence people's perceptions and satisfaction. Moreover, the motivation to consume art is not only different for each individual, but also for the same individual in different situations. In addition, the services surrounding the core merchandise significantly influence the audience (Hume, 2007). Services such as parking, staffing, and accessibility to venues and other facilities vary in importance in the minds of different consumers. These circumstances make it challenging for arts marketers to attempt to satisfy the wishes and needs of all consumers.

2.2.3 Decision-making models for theater audiences

For performing arts audiences, the decision to buy a ticket is usually related to whether the performance is of interest to them and whether the publicity is enticing. These people want to see a particular performer or a performance that interests them. For these people, consuming performing arts is often routine and habitual, a characteristic that is even more pronounced for those who buy tickets to a series of performances or subscriptions to performances. They renew their subscriptions annually, are aware of the content and quality of the performances, and thus their purchases are routine (this is known as low-involvement decision making). Low-involvement decision making means that consumers do not need to gather a lot of relevant information to thoroughly think about and decide whether to make a purchase (Kotler and Scheff, 1997). However, in the case of high-involvement decisions, the purchase decision process is more complex. High-involvement decision making usually occurs when buyers are faced with a new product that they have never experienced before, which results in a heavy reliance on the traditional mode of decision making, i.e., information gathering and rational weighing (Scheff Bernstein, 2007). This is also often the case when a product is high risk, high importance, high priced, or reflective of the consumer's own attributes.

Ultimately, after purchasing as well as experiencing a performance, consumers develop a sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction at some level. Expectation-performance theory explains that consumer satisfaction is usually related to their expectations and perceived performance. If the two match well, the consumer will be satisfied; if the perceived performance exceeds expectations, the consumer will be very satisfied; and conversely, the consumer will be dissatisfied. Consumer expectations are usually based on publicity from arts organizations, communication from other information sources, word of mouth, and past experience (Kotler and Scheff, 1997). The greater the gap between performance and consumer expectations, the more significant the consumer disappointment.

2.2.4 Theater Audience Demand Study

Consumption of the arts stems from a certain group behavior that incorporates preferences, prices, alternative prices, incomes, and socio-demographic characteristics of consumers. According to the theories of Levy-Garboua and Montmarquette (1996), demand studies are primarily concerned with the live performing arts. Since most of today's arts organizations are facing stiff competition from the entertainment industry, where audience size and their leisure time are decreasing, demand studies can reveal consumer behavior and preferences to maximize the value of theatre. In demand research, we usually use two instruments, questionnaire research and econometric research (Seaman in Ginsburg, 2006).

Kotler and Scheff (1997) emphasize that the factors influencing audiences' art consumption decisions, interests, needs and satisfaction go beyond what the artists on stage can give. They suggest that the following factors influence consumer spending: macro-environmental trends such as social, political, economic, or technological drivers; cultural factors such as nationality, subculture, and social hierarchy; societal factors such as reference groups and opinion leaders; psychological factors such as personality, beliefs, attitudes, and motivations; and personal factors such as job title, economic status, family, and age group (Kotler and Scheff, 1997).

Garbarino and Johnson (1999) place more emphasis on the direction of goals that influence people's consumption of art. The authors distinguish between different kinds of consumers with different goals, such as cultural omnivores, pseudo-connoisseurs, and hedonistic consumers. Thus, the goals of arts organizations, whether they start out to enrich the cultural market, educate, provide an emotional experience, or simply entertain, should ultimately match the target audience they hope to attract. In general, factors such as age, gender, education, and social class are considered to have a significant impact on how performing arts organizations perceive their audiences and match their programs and services accordingly.

Other studies have explored the impact of the qualities of live theater performances on audiences for the performing arts. For example, Werck and Heyndels (2007) examined the impact of certain characteristics of theatergoers on the need to attend plays. They estimated the impact of each dimension on the audience by disaggregating the quality of the performance into multiple dimensions.Willis and Snowball (2009) used conjoint analysis as well as choice experiments to examine multiple attributes of the performance product and analyze their impact on the audience. Factors they examined included cast, director/producer, style, contextualization of the production, type of product, and ticket price.

The variables tested by Levy-Garboua and Montmarquette (1996) are not limited to income, price, and the quality of the performance "product," but they also introduce the theater-going experience and the theory of "learning through consumption" into the model. They also introduced the theater-going experience and the theory of "learning through consumption" into the model. Factors that significantly influenced the quality of the performance also included the parking facilities of the theater and the food and drink provided by the theater after the performance. These two factors are positively correlated with the need to attend a theater performance. Thus, Levy-Garboua and Montmarquette expanded the scope of the study to include not only the audience's experience of the core content, but also the ancillary facilities and services.

## 2.3 Research on Theater Management in China Overview

The number of journal papers on theater architecture design in China is also relatively large. In the search of China's full-text database of journals, from 1996 to 2010, there were 287 papers published by various journals on theater design. However, the contents of the papers are mostly the introduction of the scheme of theater architecture creation, and lack of in-depth exploration and research on the theory of theater. In particular, there is a lack of high-level papers, and there are only 40 papers in core journals on theater design in the past 15 years. There is an even greater lack of academic papers on post-use evaluation of theaters, with only Associate Professor Lu Xiangdong of Tsinghua University publishing a paper on the concept of establishing a POE for theaters in China in the journal Performing Arts Science and Technology (Lu, Xiangdong, & Zheng, Shenglan, 2010).

As far as research and theses on theater architecture are concerned, compared with other types of buildings, there is a lack of theater-related research and theses, and the number of experts is extremely small. We can provide more ideas and inspiration for the development of theater architecture by studying the writings of domestic and foreign experts, as well as books on the latest examples of theater construction and theater design ideas at home and abroad.

Li Daozeng (1999) of Tsinghua University, the founder of the field of theater design and research in China, has been involved in theater design and research since the 1950s. He has collected and organized a large amount of western theatre materials and completed several monographs on theatre, such as Theatre Architectural Design Manual, Chinese Tabernacle Theatre Architecture, Atlas of Foreign Theatre Architecture, Summary of 2,300 Seat Theaters, and History of Western Drama-Theatre, which are important references for theatre research. His postgraduate students have made detailed and in-depth studies on various types and regions of theater architecture and theater development, which have also had a great influence on theater design. In addition, Mr. Liu Zhenya (2000), who teaches at the Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology, is an expert in the field of theater design. His books Contemporary Architecture for Viewing and Performing Arts and Modern Theatre Design provide detailed and comprehensive explanations and introductions of the architectural design process of theaters, and are the most important reference books and tools for architects in theater design.

In the related field of theater marketing, there are these studies as follows. Li Jiangfeng (2000) suggests that marketing in the field of theater also needs to do the analysis of the consumer market, especially the analysis of consumers (audience). At the same time, he elaborated on the concept of marketing, arguing that the marketing of the theater should already be audience-oriented, so that a meaningful marketing plan can be proposed.

In his paper "Research on the Operation and Management Mode of Tianhan Grand Theatre", Liu Winding (2006) analyzed the operation mode of many large-scale theaters in China, and proposed that the direction of Tianhan Grand Theater's operation is to break with the tradition, increase the number of performances, enhance the popularity of the theater itself, and seize more market share.

Zhu Jintang (2019) in his paper "Walt Disney Grand Theater Marketing Strategy Research" mainly explores the measurement of how to carry out the relationship between customer perceived value and product services.

The article used the brand Disney for the study and integrated marketing communication theory to argue the importance of establishing a good brand image.

Feng Yu (2015) of the Tianjin Conservatory of Music believes that marketing strategies should be derived from the work, by summarizing and analyzing the performance of the theatre and coming up with appropriate plans to promote the development of the theatre.

Yang Ruiying (2018) of Tianjin Conservatory of Music believes that the marketing of the theater is different from ordinary enterprises and products, which should first start from the promotion of plays staged by the theater, and through appropriate marketing strategies to cultivate the audience's attachment and loyalty to the theater.

Chen Zhen (2018), in "Market-oriented Operation Strategy of Theater H," suggests that many theaters in China nowadays have a more prominent operational crisis, and in addition to government funding and sponsorship funds for performance repertoire, the theater's income generation should adopt the operation of composite market laws for the establishment and promotion of theater branding, and ultimately achieve the purpose of theater profitability.

Gong Xiaoli (2020) proposed in "Exploration of Theater Marketing Mode under Internet Thinking" that the theater should incorporate more Internet thinking in its marketing strategy, and disseminate all kinds of information about the theater through various platforms online on the Internet, such as: WeChat, Weibo, and so on, and disseminate this information to consumers in the first time through the Internet. At the same time, the theater also integrates and summarizes the various experiences of consumers through the big data of the Internet to understand their needs, and finally gives the marketing strategy focusing on the audience.

Hu Jie (2020) in the "Hangzhou Theatre Marketing Strategy Research", that the marketing of the theater should adopt the traditional 4P's theory, that is, through the analysis of the product, price, channel, promotion, to get the theoretical basis of the marketing program, through this good program to maintain the operation of the theater.

In the field of theater branding, there are the following researches: Luo Cheng (2008), in the Research on Integrated Marketing Communication of Tianhan Cultural Brand of Tianhan Grand Theater, focuses on the concept of theater branding, and believes that "Tianhan" is an important cultural brand, and that the theater's architecture, culture, and repertoire can be filled with the elements of "Tianhan" as the brand characteristics of the theater. The architecture, culture and repertoire of the theater can be filled with the elements of "Tianhan" and become the brand characteristics of the theater. Combined with the enterprise practice of integrated marketing phased implementation, for the theater brand marketing to carry out a set of effective measures to protect.

Yuan Jun (2010), in "The Key to Theater Branding-Establishing the Theater's Branded Repertoire," argues that the concept of branding is used for theaters, and that the establishment of a theater's own brand is valuable for its management and marketing. The author believes that the brand of the theater refers more to the plays staged by the theater and only good plays can really allow the theater to establish its own brand con-

cept.

Huang Xin (2012) pointed out in "Brand Planning and Marketing of Shanghai Lanxin Theater" that Shanghai Lanxin Theater has an important position in the history of Chinese drama development, which is the brand foundation and brand culture of Lanxin Theater. The theater should make full use of this to build the brand of "Lanshin". The paper puts forward the author's brand marketing plan, and believes that the differentiated marketing approach should be used to increase the share of Lanshin Theatre in the Shanghai theater market.

In "Brand Construction of Theater", Jiang Tao (2017) analyzed the existing theater brands in China, and made a compendium of the development history and current situation. The authors believe that it is very necessary to develop theater branding, and many of China's current theaters have begun to implement branding strategies, with Beijing and Shanghai being the majority.

Sui Kexin (2018) analyzes the current situation of marketing in theaters and presents marketing problems that have been refracted through these problems in traditional theaters. The author proposes that theaters can use new media to broaden the publicity channels so as to solve some marketing problems of theaters.

Ma Ming and Chen Mengdi (2020) defined the new theater in "Research on the Operation and Management of Yangzhou New Theater under the Perspective of Brand Communication," arguing that the newness of the theater mainly focuses on the aspects of culture and content creativity, and arguing that one of the major features of the new theater that distinguishes it from the traditional theaters is the brand building. The author studies the role, significance and path of Yangzhou New Theater in spreading the brand of Huaiyang regional culture from the perspectives of strategic positioning, target planning, operation and promotion and audience expansion.

# 3. An overview of the development and current situation of the management model of Chinese theaters

## 3.1 Management Model of Chinese Theaters before 1978

From 1949 to 1978, before the reform of the cultural system, the management and operation mode of Chinese theaters operated according to the public ownership system and the socialist planned economy mode, and the management and operation of theaters also copied the operation mode of the "planned economy era", with the government exercising administrative control over the theaters, ignoring the role of the market in the allocation of resources.

In this period, the management mode of the theater is also completely in accordance with the management mode of the economic field, the performance repertoire and other contents of the theater are all in accordance with the arrangements of the government's cultural management department, in accordance with the economic field of the socialist planned economy mode of operation and management, the government's cultural management department of the theater's operation, the repertoire, the performance plan, personnel, finances and so on, all have a strict control:

The theater was built with full government funding, including later operation and management, and the theater is a publicly owned institution, excluding all other ownership of business activities.

Theaters are government-run institutions, producing cultural products for the government's propaganda and education services, and are the mouthpiece of the Party and the government, so the theater's performances are homogenized, and it is impossible to provide diversified cultural products to meet the cultural needs of different people.

Theaters have no financial autonomy, and all sources of funding come from government grants, including salaries for personnel, expenses for performances, and regular maintenance and development of the theater, but at the same time, all surpluses from theater performances have to be paid to the state treasury.

With the arrival of the reform and opening up in 1978, China's cultural construction has entered a period of rapid development, from the central to local governments began to gradually pay attention to the development of cultural undertakings, the construction of domestic theaters appeared the first climax. At the beginning of the founding of the country, China's economic foundation is very weak, economic strength is not enough cultural construction is even more backward, theaters and other large-scale performing arts space building construction is not standardized standards.

After 1978, 22 provinces and municipalities and 4 municipalities directly under the central government in China have built 141 large-scale theaters with more than 1,200 seats. Compared with the pre-1978 period, not only municipalities and provincial capitals, but also other cities with a better economic foundation and even some county-level cities have also built theaters. For example, among the 11 prefectural-level cities in Zhejiang, 8 have built large-scale theaters with more than 1,200 seats, and another 3 are under construction. Among the 22 provinces, the four provinces with the most large-scale theaters are Guangdong Province, Jiangsu Province, Zhejiang Province and Hunan Province. In terms of regional distribution, the construction of theaters is more intensive in East China and North China, and relatively intensive in South China. (Zhang Ruiqi , 2011)

## 3.2 Exploration of the two-track system during the ice-breaking period (1978-1991)

The construction of Chinese theaters has seen a climax since the late 70's. The reason for this is that with the growth of economic construction. With the rapid development of China's national economy, both the state finance and people's income have grown significantly, and the people's spiritual needs have become more and more obvious, and the consumption demand has gradually expanded to non-materialized spiritual needs. In this context, the cultural construction of the first place will focus on the construction of cultural and performing arts facilities, theater is one of the necessary buildings for the performance of cultural and artistic activities.

In addition, due to the country's cultural exchanges, Chinese and foreign cultural exchanges are becoming more and more frequent, China's outstanding traditional culture to go out, but also need to invite international high-quality performances to come in, resulting in the acceptance of foreign professional performances to increase the demand for more and more internationally renowned performance teams need to come to China to perform in exchanges, for the performance of the venue put forward a higher demand, in this context, more and more professional theaters! Against this background, more and more professional theaters are emerging.

In 1979, the Ministry of Culture issued the Opinions on Adjusting the Career, Reforming the System and Improving the Leadership and Management of Performing Arts Organizations, which proposed for the first time the decentralization of the right to perform repertoire, finance and employment.

In 1980, the nationwide performing arts organizations began to try to contract the management responsibility system as the main form of reform of troupes, but for the pilot reform of performing arts organizations, at that time, only limited to a few places, the pilot unit is also conservatively limited to the county-level cities, did not touch the central and provincial troupes.

In April 1985, the establishment was further clarified and the staff streamlined; the existing leadership and internal management systems were reformed, and the autonomy of the organization was expanded.

During this period, the problems in the management and operation of theaters were more prominent. From a managerial standpoint, the cultural administration is both the organizer of cultural and artistic activities and the leader of the cultural and artistic unit, forming a direct relationship of leadership and leadership between the two. As a result, the theaters had less autonomy in management and operation, forming an organizational and management model with a high degree of upward concentration of power and state underwriting. At the same time, based on the distribution system at the time of the implementation of egalitarianism, for mobilizing the enthusiasm of the theater staff is very unfavorable. To sum up, the theater management in this period showed a dual-track exploration period of attempted reform and problems.

### 3.3 Attempts at entrepreneurial management in the overall promotion phase (1992-2002)

In 1993, the theater reform combined the new form of socialist market economic system proposed by the economic reform, focusing on supporting a small number of national or provincial level theater troupes that are representative of national culture or have historical preservation value. (Yu Xunlai, 2014)

In 1994, it was further clarified that the purpose of the restructuring of the theater group was to establish a perfect and full of market activities in the management and operation system, no matter from the adjustment of the government's financial input or the internal personnel management system of the theater group, all of them were included in the new round of institutional reform, completely breaking the "big pot rice" egalitarianism, establishing a new type of distribution system and incentive mechanism. Incentive mechanism. (Zhou Quanhua, 2011)

In 1994, the theaters and troupes carried out a deepening of their reforms, gradually promoting the establishment of a sound management and operation mechanism by the performance subsidy mechanism, and promoting commercial performances by theaters and troupes in addition to fulfilling major performance tasks and artistic production targets. The implementation of the performance subsidy mechanism, with the incentive mechanism of more performances, less performances, less compensation, and no compensation for no performances, broke the drawbacks of the traditional system of big pots of rice, and mobilized the performance enthusiasm of all the troupes, from the past's demand for me to the evolution of my performances. 1995, the business performances of the 10 CND troupes were 893, and in 1996, the growth rate was 48.4% to reach

1,325. 1996 performance income for the 10 CND troupes reached 1,837.3 million dollars, with the revenue of the 10 CND troupes amounting to 1,837.3 million dollars. In 1996, the income from the performances of the 10 CCTV troupes amounted to 18,373,000 yuan, realizing a direct surplus of 5,649,000 yuan. (Luo Song, 1997)

At this stage, the institutional reform of the theater group focuses on the reform of state-owned theater groups. While the institutional reform of the theater group and the establishment of internal management and operation mechanism, the state has increased the financial investment in the theater group and built a reasonable and standardized layout of the performance market as well as the supporting economic, cultural and artistic policies, etc. In the internal reform of the theater group, the group has also made the supporting construction and adjustments around the market environment, and the market orientation of the production and performance has been significantly strengthened, and industrialized operation has formed an initial scale. The production and performance of the market-oriented has been significantly strengthened, the industrialization of the operation has formed a preliminary scale, the internal management mechanism of the theater group gradually by the institutionalized management mode to the enterprise management mode change.

## 3.4 Conversion and restructuring in the phase of the offensive (2003-2012)

During this period, the focus of the theater system reform turned to the reform of the internal operation and management mechanism of the theater, from the administrative management mode to the market-oriented modern enterprise management mode, to promote the theater to become self-management and self-sustainable operators of cultural commodities.In July 2012, the Chinese Puppetry Arts Theater, founded in 1955, completed the reform and established the Chinese Puppetry Arts Theater Co. Thus, the wave of enterprise reform and restructuring swept across the country from Beijing. (Zhai Qun, 2011)

## 3.5 Comprehensive and deepening stage of theater system reform (2012-present)

Theatre system reform has been further deepened after 2012, and the following results have been achieved: the reform of transforming operating theaters into enterprises has been completed on a large scale, and theaters and troupes have begun to carry out entrepreneurial operation and management; the ideological awareness within the management of the theaters has changed, and a clear development strategy for the future has been defined; the theaters have shifted their original thinking of asking the government for money, people, and land to the production of art and planning and organization of the theaters. ; the reforms of the personnel system and distribution system have been implemented, and the remuneration of personnel has been improved. Reform and improve the treatment of personnel.

The reform of the theater management system in this period has made a major breakthrough, but at the same time it has also revealed some existing problems. A part of the theaters that have been transformed into enterprises have not yet adapted and adjusted to the changes in the management style, and for the theaters that have become modern enterprise-type theaters still continue to continue the management methods of the institutions, resulting in a new increase in the market tasks on top of the original political tasks after the theaters have been transformed into enterprises and restructured, which has brought a greater burden on the theaters after the transformation. (Chengxiao, 2017)

## 3.6 Current Situation of Chinese Theater Management Models

According to the Research Report on the Development of Professional Theaters in China, as of 2017, there were 873 theaters in China, accounting for 30.7% of the country's performance venues.

From the perspective of distribution area, it shows that there are more in the east and less in the west. Specific distribution: the eastern region has 507, accounting for 58.1% of the total number of national theaters; the central region has 203, accounting for 23.3% of the total number of national theaters; the western region only 163, accounting for only 18.6% of the total number of national theaters. The eastern region of the southeast coast has the largest number of theaters, mainly concentrated in Beijing, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Guangdong, Shandong, with a total of 324 theaters, accounting for 37.1% of the total number of theaters in the country.

In terms of the administrative level of cities, there are 307 theaters in China's 4 municipalities and 27 provincial capitals, with an average of 9.9 theaters per city; there are 379 theaters in the country's 30 prefectural-level cities, with an average of 1.2 theaters per prefectural-level city; and the total number of theaters in the country's 1,927 county-level cities is only 187, with an average of only one theater in 10 county-level cities. professional theaters, and the vast majority of county-level cities in the western region do not have theaters.
In terms of the size of theaters, the proportion of medium-sized theaters with 801-1200 seats is the highest, with a total of 396 theaters, accounting for 45.4% of the total number of theaters; followed by 112 large-sized theaters with 1201-1600 seats, accounting for 12.8% of the total number of theaters; 295 theaters with less than 800 seats, accounting for 33.8% of the total number of theaters; and 70 mega theaters with more than 1,601 seats, accounting for 8% of the total number of theaters. There are 112 large theaters with 1,201-1,600 seats, accounting for 12.8% of the total; 295 theaters with less than 800 seats, accounting for 33.8% of the total; and 70 mega theaters with more than 1,601 seats, accounting for 8% of the total.

In terms of the years in which theaters were built, 150 theaters were built before 1960, accounting for 17.2% of the total number of theaters; 110 theaters were built between 1961 and 1980, accounting for 12.6% of the total; 288 theaters were built between 1981 and 2000, accounting for 33% of the total; and 325 theaters were built after 2001, accounting for 37.2% of the total.

China's theater operation and management mode shows a diversified trend. At present, with the development of the economy and the booming of cultural undertakings, the operation and management modes of theaters are constantly being updated and upgraded to meet the needs of the society and the needs of the people. Although the general direction of the reform of the theater system is the same, due to historical reasons, the actual situation of theaters around the world is different, and the policies of each local government as well as the specific reform measures for the theater are not the same. However, in general, the mode of theater operation and management can be roughly divided into the following four categories (Cheng Xiao, 2017):

Self-operated. The main feature of self-managed theaters is that the owner and operator of the theater are the same subject. Theaters have professional management departments and personnel responsible for the other side of the operation of the theater, its main source of income depends on its own organization of the program performance of the box office, on the other hand, the theater will be rented to other performance groups to get the rent is also one of the main sources of income of self-managed theaters. This model in the domestic

theater management and operation generally exists in the theater with business establishment under the government cultural departments, such as the National Grand Theater, Shanghai Grand Theater and so on.

Escrow operation. The hosting mode refers to the fact that the owner of the theater does not participate in the daily management and operation of the theater, but entrusts a professional theater management company. The theater owner and the theater management company sign a contract to entrust the management, and during the entrusted management period, the professional theater management company is responsible for the theater's business activities. The theater owner receives a fixed escrow fee as its annual income, while the theater management company uses the repertoire box office, venue rentals, and other ancillary facility rentals as its source of income. The advantage of the escrow management model is that the management of the theater can be handed over to a professional company, so that the owner can devote more energy to other aspects of the business.

Theater management. Theatre line management mode refers to the theatre to join the theatre management company, the theatre retains the ownership also controls the actual operating rights, the theatre management company to provide the theatre with the repertoire and other information services, the theatre through the payment of service fees, access to the repertoire and performance arrangements, the theatre line management and management is conducive to the docking of the theatre and the market, and better focus on the theatre's resources in a clustered manner. Under this model, theaters can obtain more repertoire resources to better meet the needs of the audience.

Theater Troupe Integration. Troupe integration refers to the theater has its own resident troupe, in the management and operation of the first to meet the resident troupe's performances, but also can be arranged for other dates of the performance of the rental or the introduction of other troupes of performances. Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center is a theater that has its own professional performance team and a venue for theater performances. This model can better ensure the quality and quantity of the theater's performances, so that the audience can enjoy different types of performances in the same theater.

As China's cultural industry enters a period of high-quality development, the country's theaters have also entered a new channel of growth and development. From a national perspective, almost every province and city has set off or is in the process of setting off a big theater boom, and there are now more than 2,000 theaters being built and rebuilt across China (Yang Chen, 2020). Although the number of theaters is increasing, there is still a big gap with the development level of theaters in Europe and the United States, and there are deficiencies in performance venues, stages, facilities and commercial operations, branding, management system, etc., which have not produced the brand effect of globally famous theaters. However, through years of reform, we can see that China's theaters are gradually presenting a diversity of programs, the business model is also moving in the direction of diversification, the theater's branding is gradually carried out.

## 4. Overview of Chinese Theater Brand Management Model Cases

At the end of this article, I will make a brief overview of Chinese domestic theaters with distinctive management modes, and explore the importance of "branding" for theater management from the management modes of these theaters.

## 4.1 Shanghai Drama Center's "One Troupe" Management Model

As one of the only state-owned drama performing arts troupes in Shanghai, Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center is one of the top drama production groups in China. The writers, directors, actors, choreographers and other professional creative and performing talents under the center are all experienced and representative of China's artistic level. In addition, the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center has a number of professional theaters. These fully functional venues of various sizes create, exchange, introduce and tour more than 800 performances on their own every year, attracting the attention and love of more than 330,000 audiences.

Adhering to the core values of socialism and in line with Shanghai's positioning as a global city of excellence by 2040, the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center puts forward the development objectives of adhering to the people-centered creative orientation and striving to build the Center into a modern theater with international reputation and matching Shanghai's status as a city. The Center will pursue a leading role in the development of the industry and strive to become an international first-class drama production group.

4.1.1 The "one field mission" management model

1) The concept of "field integration"

The model of "one theater and one troupe" refers to the fact that the theater and the troupe are the same organizational unit, and the theater mainly provides performance venues for the troupe it belongs to, while the troupe spends most of its time performing in the theater it owns, with its repertoire reserved for rotating performances. This is a very successful international business model, many famous large-scale theaters have implemented this model, such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Berliner Theater Company, the Moscow Art Theatre and the Comédie-Française Theatre, etc., which all own their own theaters, and these theaters are also the cultural card of the city, such as the Comédie-Française Theatre and the Moscow Art Theatre, and other well-known theaters are very famous for their theaters. The "one theater, one company" model is conducive to theater companies to arrange their own plans, cultivate their own audience, especially for the development of audience bonding is very important, can be planned and arranged around their own theater, so as to carry out brand building and construction.

2) Overview of Shanghai Drama Center's "One Theater, One Troupe

Looking back at Shanghai's theaters from the perspective of "one theater, one troupe", we can see that there are 18 state-owned drama troupes and more than 300 private drama troupes in Shanghai. Among these 18 theaters, very few of them used to have their own theaters. In the past 20 years, more and more troupes have started to own their own theaters.

In the early days of the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center, the center only had a small 100-seat theater at the Shanghai People's Art Theater. Shanghai's drama professionals have always aspired to have their own theater, much like the Capital Theater at the Beijing People's Art Theater.

In the early 1990s, the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center seized the opportunity of real estate development through land exchange, and in 2000, the building of the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center was completed, including the Grand Theater, the Drama Salon and the D6 space. Since then, SDCA has been able to plan and arrange productions around its own theater, giving full play to the advantages of "one theater, one company"

and maximizing the cultivation of audiences and markets. Audiences have gradually developed the habit of "coming to Anfu Road to watch a play". The interaction between the theater and the audience is frequent and positive, forming a stable audience group.

Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center is a bright pearl in Shanghai's drama industry, and since its founding, it has become the preferred place for Shanghai's drama audiences to watch dramas. The Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center's Grand Theater Art Theater is one of the most suitable professional theaters in Shanghai for drama performances, equipped with 530 seats and advanced lighting and sound equipment, with a very spacious stage space and an auditorium that is very congregated, with no dead space. In the same building are two other small theaters, Drama Salon and D6 Space, each with 200 seats. Both of these small theaters are black-box style, and the Drama Salon's auditorium can be telescoped or made into a center stage for all four sides of the audience, and all the walls are movable and very flexible.

3) Changes brought about by the "field mission integration"

Now, the three theaters of Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center have been refurbished and reopened in June 2019. The refreshed theaters have been upgraded in terms of stage installations, equipment, seating, and space, giving audiences a better quality theater-going experience. In the theater, it is often said that the play is bigger than the sky, and in the theater, it is often said that the audience is God. For a theater, the content of the performance is of course important, but the part outside the play, especially the service, is even more important. In the case of more and more theaters in Shanghai, theater management is not only the content of the play and accurate positioning, but also the service consciousness, which is the fundamental theater management.

Because it has its own performance venue, Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center can carry out the whole market cultivation program, such as the implementation of membership system, to cultivate more audiences. In addition, the audience became familiar with the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center and gained a deeper understanding of the theater because it had a regular performance venue. The Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center also launched the advertising slogan "Come to Anfu Road for Drama", which attracted more audiences to come and watch the plays and helped the theater to establish its own style. For people in the industry, Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center can provide better services and attract more artists to perform or cooperate here. In addition, Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center has been committed to making its theater a platform for exchange and cooperation between Chinese and foreign artists, which is in line with the positioning of the city of Shanghai, which is a big dock for domestic and foreign performances, and needs more performances and a source of living water in order to make a fine water flow. Therefore, Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center organizes the Shanghai International Contemporary Theatre Festival in its own theatre, aiming to invite more cutting-edge works of international theatre to perform in Shanghai, in order to promote exchanges and cooperation between Chinese and foreign artists.

Since the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center has its own theater, they have also cooperated with stores on Anfu Road to offer a series of discounted services for watching plays. This cooperation is not only a kind of promotion for the theater itself, but also provides an opportunity for the stores to attract customers. This kind of cooperation brings a win-win situation, which not only attracts more audiences, but also improves the performance of the stores. For more than twenty years, the existence and development of Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center in Anfu Road is not only a theater, but also a cultural symbol and representative of this street, and together they have created a unique and attractive cultural landscape of the city.

In addition to this, Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center provides a wide variety of activities and services for the audience. During the season, it regularly organizes interactive activities for the audience, such as after-viewing exchanges and meet-the-actors meetings, to give the audience a chance to get to know the plays and the artists more deeply. In addition, they have launched the "Artistic Life Education Program", which aims to cultivate the aesthetic ability and cultural literacy of young audiences through artistic experiences and exchanges, and at the same time train more reserves for future artists and cultural workers.

Overall, since Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center has its own theater, they have continued to explore and try, and have made great achievements in management, creation, performance, market cultivation and cultural heritage. Their successful experience is not only instructive for the theater industry, but also provides the city's cultural construction with experiences and ideas that can be drawn upon. Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center will continue to devote itself to creating more excellent repertoires, constantly improving its artistic level and cultural connotation, providing audiences with better artistic enjoyment and cultural experience, and also making more contributions to the city's cultural development.

## 4.2 Poly Theatre's "Theatre Line" Management Model

Founded in 1983, China Poly Group Corporation's unique corporate culture is one of loyalty, reliability, discipline and execution. Beijing Poly Theater has adhered to this excellent business philosophy of Poly Group and has developed a very famous brand in the performance field in China. As a company of Beijing Poly Theater Management Co., Ltd, it is their goal to be the best theater management in China. The Company has replicated this management philosophy, experience and services to its theater members with remarkable results. In addition, the company has accelerated cooperation with theaters in large and medium-sized cities in China to create a strategic and regionalized cultural industry platform, continuously enhance the brand value of Poly Theater Management, and with the management goal of "high professionalism, high management standards, high service quality, high operation level, and high social image", it has formed a set of systematic and characteristic management forms for theaters around the country. It has formed a set of systematic and distinctive management forms for theaters around the world.

### 4.2.1 "Poly Cinema" Overview

Poly Cinema Line is a fast-growing theater business established in 2003 by Beijing Poly Theater Management Co. It operates more than 70 theaters in 62 cities in 22 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government, and adopts the management system of "headquarters + regions + project companies + functional departments" and the operation mechanism of "headquarters builds the stage, local opera", forming a unique "Poly Model". "Poly Model".

Within the domestic theatre industry, the management model of Beijing Poly Theatre Line is the only vertically centralized management in the industry. The performance management platform operated by this theater management company can unify the operation and management of the 37 theaters contracted by Poly Theater Line. Poly Theater Management Company has formulated the country's first "Theater Management Code" and "Industry Standards," which enable Poly Theater Line's management standards and sharing of repertoire resources. In addition, the theater line's subsidiary, Poly Theater Engineering and Construction Consulting Company, provides theater engineering and construction consulting services for more than 30 theaters, mak-

ing it the largest and most professional theater construction consulting team in China.

Through standardized and professional management, Poly Cinema Line has continuously improved the quality of its artistic products and performances, earning a reputation both inside and outside the industry. Due to the success of the management model adopted by Poly Theatre Line, more and more local theaters have signed contracts and cooperated with it, receiving standardized theatre management training and high-quality performance resources at good quality and low price, which has contributed to the improvement of the operation of local theaters, thus further expanding the brand influence of Poly Theatre Line.

4.2.2 Poly Cinema's Management Model

The business structure of Poly Theatre Cinema Line focuses on the establishment of contracted theatres and the implementation of standardized and patterned replication management for the members of the theaters. In this way, Poly Theatre Cinema Line can realize the price advantage of winning by scale advantage based on the large number and wide range of regions. Moreover, through the price of group purchase, it can further share the cost of performance and expand the profit margin. At the same time, Poly Theater Theater Line adopts top-down administrative management, which enables the plays to tour nationwide and ensures the performance quality and number of performances of each member theater. This management style avoids the embarrassing scene of performers asking for exorbitant prices and theaters having difficulty in affording high costs as well as high quality and quantity of performance repertoire, thus realizing a standardized and benign market law for the main business entities under the brand platform of Poly Theatre Line, thus ensuring a win-win advantageous situation for all parties and realizing the company's management objectives.

1) Contracted theaters to implement model management

At present, China's cultural market has entered a new stage, and modernized enterprise management system has become the trend of cultural industry development. By signing contracts with many domestic theaters, Beijing Poly Theater Management Co., Ltd. integrates high-quality resources and implements a unified model management for its member theaters, thus following the laws of the market and operating the cultural industry scientifically.

When signing up theaters, Poly Theater Management Company will have certain selective conditions, and will generally consider local theaters with a certain audience base or government support. The reason for such selection is that the operation and daily maintenance of the theater requires continuous financial support, and the performance industry chain can operate normally only under certain financial guarantee.

After signing the contract, Poly Theatre Management will regulate and professionalize the daily operation of the member theatres based on internal management norms. This procedural and institutionalized arrangement covers all the daily work of the theatre, from performances to cleaning, with corresponding statutes and processes to follow. Staff members are required to perform their work in strict accordance with the regulations of Poly Theatre Theatre Management, and all work coordination between departments is executed through the data and form contents within the local area network. This quantitative management method improves work efficiency and accuracy.

Through such management, Poly Theatre Theatre Line has realized standardized market operation, avoiding

the embarrassing scene of performers asking for sky-high prices and theaters having difficulties in loading high-cost and high-quality performance repertoire, which makes the business entities realize standardized and benign market laws under the platform of Poly Theatre Line as a brand name, thus realizing the advantageous situation of win-win situation for all parties.

In addition, the regulated and standardized management style also provides more opportunities for the development of the theater. Through standardized management, Poly Theatre Line has realized the national tour of the plays, which enables the excellent performances to be displayed all over the country, so that more audiences can enjoy the high-quality performances, which in turn enhances the reputation and popularity of the theatre. At the same time, the standardized management also provides more opportunities for the capital operation of the theater, for example, Poly Theatre Line can further share the cost of performances and expand profit margins through group purchasing to achieve the price advantage of winning by volume.

In short, Poly Theatre Line has achieved the advantageous situation of win-win for all parties through standardized and standardized management, making the operation of the theatre more efficient, standardized and orderly. This business model has a positive role in promoting the healthy development of the cultural industry.

2) Unified procurement of plays and sharing of performance costs

With precise market insight and in-depth audience psychology research, the performance procurement department of Poly Theatre Management Company regularly completes the task of purchasing performance programs for the following year, and then distributes the performance program list to 70 contracted theaters nationwide. According to statistics, about 70% of these programs are arranged by Poly Theatre Line, while the remaining 30% are chosen by local governments or theaters. Poly Theater Line guarantees the quality of performances by selecting excellent and tested plays in various categories. This good performance quality and service quality has also earned Poly Theater Line a high degree of trust from the community and the cultural performance sector. In addition, due to Poly Theatre Line's large scale and strong brand effect, high-quality first-class performance groups and performance management units are more willing to cooperate with it. Therefore, the negotiation position between Poly Theatre Line and the performers also has a great advantage, which makes the high-quality and high-standard performance products to be promoted to the major theaters with preferential group purchase price, and successfully improves the performance quality of the whole line. Ultimately, through the orderly operation of repertoire production, publicity and promotion and ticket sales, theater performances and other links, Poly Theatre Line always focuses on consumers, creating a strong artistic atmosphere for the audience and providing high-quality performances, thus ensuring the benign operation of the theater.

The Poly Theater Management Platform carefully selects each performance to ensure the quality of the staged program. First, the platform will determine the categories of the performances, and then select the best plays that have stood the test of time from these categories. As a result of the strict quality control of performances over a long period of time, the plays staged by Poly Theatre Line have made a great impact on the society and the cultural performance industry. Audiences have more and more trust in Poly Theatre Line's productions, and outstanding performance groups and performance management units are more inclined to cooperate with

this kind of "invisible advertisement", forming a virtuous circle.

However, the high price of many famous first-class performances in the world is a huge cost that many large and medium-sized theaters can hardly afford. In this case, the absolute advantage of Poly Theater Line becomes apparent. The platform gathers 70 theaters to talk about performance prices with performers, which is more powerful than a single theater. Considering Poly Theatre's brand advantage, excellent service quality and a large number of high-quality performances, high-quality and high-level first-class performances will also "put down" to preferential group-buying prices with Poly Theatre Line, to realize the business strategy of small profits and high sales.

3) Nationwide tour with guaranteed contracted theater performances
By adopting the method of national member theaters touring, Poly Theatre Line achieves the coordinated arrangement of performance venues, publicity, sponsorship, ticketing, settlement method, audience organization, reception of performance teams, transportation of performance teams, etc., thus ensuring that the theaters signing up for the line have the basic arrangement of performance venues. In addition, the member theaters can also arrange their own performances according to their own spare slot time, which not only increases the autonomy and flexibility of the members of the theater line, but also better adapts to the market demand.

In order to improve the quality of performances, Poly Theatre Line chooses to unify the high-quality plays in all the theaters, which on one hand can ensure the slot demand of the performances, and on the other hand can significantly reduce the cost of performances. In 2013, for example, Poly Theatre Line toured more than 500 shows nationwide, saving costs of more than 55 million yuan, which intuitively reflects the advantages of theater touring on a large scale.

Poly Theatre Line's national tours not only fulfill the performance targets and profit targets of the local government, the owner of the contracted theaters, but also make the cooperation between the major performing troupes and the contracted theaters become closer and closer. This close cooperation not only improves the quality of performances and audience satisfaction, but also strengthens the foundation of Poly Theater Line's sustainable development.

## 4.3 The National Grand Theater's Creating IP Image Management Model

The National Grand Theater of China is located in the center of Beijing, west of Tiananmen Square and west of the Great Hall of the People. It is composed of the main building, an underwater promenade on the north and south sides, an underground parking lot, an artificial lake and green spaces. Paul Andreu was the French architect who presided over the design of the Grand Theater. The building has a semi-elliptical appearance, with an east-west long axis length of 212.20 meters, a north-south short axis length of 143.64 meters, a building height of 46.285 meters, and an area of 118,900 square meters. The total construction area is about 165,000 square meters, of which the main building occupies 105,000 square meters and the underground auxiliary facilities occupy 60,000 square meters, with a total cost of 3.067 billion yuan. The building is equipped with an opera house, a concert hall, a theater, as well as ancillary facilities such as an art exhibition hall, a restaurant, and an audio-visual store.

4.3.1 Online IP image of the National Grand Theater

1) Art The Birth of the Goose

The launch of Art Goose, an online IP image, can be said to be a cross-border innovation in the development of the Grand Theater's brand. Through the audience's votes, Art Goose not only has the temperament of elegant art, but also has a friendly and pleasing personality, which is in line with the concept of making elegant art accessible to the public pursued by the Bolshoi Theatre. At the same time, this image is also an attempt of the Bolshoi Theatre to launch an online IP in the era of new media development and active cross-border integration. Through this image, the Grand Theater can attract more attention and participation from the audience on the new media platform, expand the hub between the theater and the audience, and establish a "strong relationship" in brand communication with new possibilities, so as to enhance the image and influence of the theater brand in the hearts of the audience.

Art Goose of the National Grand Theater officially got its own staff card at the 12th anniversary press conference, and became one of the representatives of the theater's new media online image. The Art Goose not only provides new creative ideas for the NCPA's cultural creation and catering, but also offers infinite possibilities for exploring the application of art organization IP in the commercial field. The IP image was designed with strong symbols, colors, and phrases in mind to facilitate consumer search and quickly capture consumers' minds. The Grand Theater put the choice of image into the hands of consumers by launching a vote on Weibo and other self-media platforms, where fans and netizens chose the final swan image out of the eight proposals.The issuance of the Art Swan's staff card marked the official onboarding of this new media IP image at the NCPA.

In order to give the IP image a sense of "personification", the NCPA wrote the story of Art Goose's past life and present life based on its eggshell-like appearance and the overall staff portrait. The story tells that when the National Grand Theater was built in 2007, a round and smooth egg silently appeared in the corner of the busy construction site. The workers thought it was a big stone, picked it up and put it next to the pool outside the gate. art goose seems to be born for art, when it "broke out of its shell", it carried an elegant and noble temperament. Voted on by the theater staff and the audience, Art Goose became the representative of the theater and the main character that we see today. This story not only increases the cuteness and affinity of the Art Goose image, but also allows the audience to better understand and familiarize with this IP image, which represents the online image of the National Grand Theatre in new media.

2) Art Goose's IP Promotion

In order to make the IP image more widely used and more closely integrated with the Bolshoi Theatre brand, as well as to enhance its "Bolshoi Theatre" attributes, the designers made new creations in the first phase of the promotion. They extended the image of Art Goose based on the characters in the classic self-produced plays of the Bolshoi Theater. Through the appearance of 12 new character images, the application scenarios of Art Goose became richer, and at the same time, it was linked with the play to make the audience accept the IP image of the art organization more easily. This linkage not only enhances the associative power of the IP image, but also leverages self-produced plays that have successfully gained brand influence to promote each other, thus expanding the capacity of the Grand Theater's online IP brand.

The National Grand Theater's online IP image is an important element in the cultural and creative and cater-

ing products, which also prompted the design and production of physical derivatives. For the 12th anniversary of the theater, on the cultural and creative side, Art Swan's first series focused on the theme of warmth and companionship, choosing skin-friendly and soft velvet fabric to match the elegant appearance of the swan, and launching a wide range of products suitable for all ages, such as dress-matching items, daily necessities, and school supplies, so that consumers can perceive the brand's philosophy and deepen the impression of the brand when purchasing the derivatives. As for F&B, a swan cake suitable for on-site consumption, a printed coffee suitable for savoring on the move, and a lollipop suitable for serving as an accompanying gift were introduced. At the public open day, these products were loved and noticed by the audience, with high sales and participation.

In addition, on the 12th anniversary public open day of the National Grand Theater, a brand promotion program was specially designed for the online IP image. The theater set up an immersive interactive experience area "Art Goose Cafe" themed on swan elements, where the audience could participate in Art Goose-themed paintings, messages and other interactive experiences in this flash space. With a very high traffic flow on that day, the audience stopped to watch the Art Goose video and wrote their blessings to the theater on the feather messages. The whole event was a great success, not only increasing brand awareness and audience attention, but also bringing a pleasant and unforgettable experience to the audience.

The most important application scenario of Art Goose at this stage is to play the role of the main visual VI image in the online all-media platform of the National Grand Theater, and act as the voice of strips, performance announcements and performance recommendations. As the epitome of theater staff, the birth of IP has weakened the strong demand for endorsement by celebrities or actors in the past. From the publicity chain of Art Goose, we can see that the new IP image can activate the audience's attention to the brand and add value to the brand of "National Grand Theater". Offline, the birth of Art Goose opens up a new IP commercialization mode other than box office revenue, effectively divides the second level of production value products such as cultural creation, catering and public space, realizes the closed loop of promotion with IP image as the core, leads the development of IP of art institutions, and receives good comments from the market.

In the era of continuous development and evolution of modern media, creating an IP image has become one of the trends in developing brands in various industries. Successful IP image can help brand communication and provide more possibilities for enterprise development and brand building. Theater industry is no exception. When building a brand, theaters often use the theater itself or the performance segment as a single brand or mother-son brand, but this brand lacks the connection between the audience and is especially unattractive to the younger, youthful audience. Therefore, the theater brand now pays more attention to "brand = product + personality", with virtual elements of the brand IP can quickly close the distance between the audience, to win the audience's love, and increase the audience's recognition of the theater brand and the degree of importance. This IP image expands the connection between the theater and the audience and establishes a "strong relationship" in brand communication, thus deepening the influence of the theater brand and laying the foundation for its future development.

## 5. Summarize

People's understanding of theater is a process from shallow to deep, from single to multiple. There are two

main clues to people's understanding of the theater. One is the functional setting of the theater. The earliest research on the theater came into people's view mainly in terms of architectural form and functional design. From the perspective of the history of the development of traditional Chinese culture, the theater originated as a place of rituals and ceremonies, and the content of the performances gradually evolved from worshipping the gods and ancestors to pleasing the gods, which in turn possessed a kind of entertainment in the sense of the function. With the continuous development of the economy and society, the theater and from aristocratic to civilian development, is no longer exclusive to the aristocracy, but become an important component of daily life, the development of popular culture laid the foundation, but also for the commercialization of the theater marketing paved the way. Second, the artistic status of the theater. People's understanding of dramatic art has gone through several stages of development, the earliest centered on the dramatic text, the elements related to the performance are in a subordinate position, and the artistic value of the theater itself is even more neglected for a long time. After the Renaissance movement, the value of human being was recognized in dramatic art and gradually turned to the center. At the same time, the value of the theater was gradually discovered, affirmed, and even began the expulsion of the dramatic text. Because the human factor in dramatic performance has a closer relationship with the theater, to a large extent, it is required to get rid of the constraints of the script, and advocate the improvisation on the spot, in pursuit of a "pure drama" art form.

Research on the management and marketing of theater has developed along the evolutionary path of the understanding of theater described above. The entertainment function of theatrical performances and the development of civilianization are the roots of the emergence of commercial theaters. The emphasis of theatrical art on the elements of the theater provides the basic conditions for the management and marketing of the theater, highlighting the fundamental difference between the management of the theater and the marketing of the performing arts and the management and marketing of other commercial forms. In short, the fundamental characteristic of theater management and marketing is the dichotomy between commerciality and artistry, public welfare and entertainment. Theater brand management and marketing is to find the right balance in this contradiction.

One important aspect of the management of Chinese theatres, which varies according to the type of theatre and the specific organization, is funding. Many theatres are supported by government subsidies or other forms of public funding, and may also receive income from ticket sales, sponsorships or other sources. Effective financial management is therefore critical to the sustainability of theatre organizations.

Another key aspect of theater management is programming and artistic direction. Many theaters have an artistic director or programming committee that selects and develops performances, often with the goal of balancing artistic excellence with popular appeal. This may involve discovering emerging artists or new works, as well as collaborating with established artists to produce high-quality performances.

In addition to artistic direction, theater management in China includes logistical and administrative tasks such as arranging performances, managing people and resources, and ensuring compliance with relevant regulations and standards. This can involve working closely with a variety of stakeholders, including artists, technicians, suppliers and government officials.

Another important aspect of theater management in China is audience development and promotion. Many

theatres strive to build and maintain a loyal audience base and may invest in marketing and promotional activities to reach new audiences. This may involve using social media and other digital platforms, as well as developing partnerships with local schools, community groups and other organizations.

Taken together with the above review of the theater management literature, the author's research position has two main footholds. The first is that theater management marketing has its own unique rules. As a new type of business, theater marketing in accordance with the purely commercial mode of operation is often a failure, we must explore a new model in line with the laws of theater management. Secondly, theater art can bring unique experience for consumers. From the perspective of consumer experience, theater brands and services are richer and more three-dimensional than general goods and services, and these factors, especially the impact of theater brand factors have not been systematically studied and measured.

From the research results of the existing literature, the author did not find any in-depth specialized research on theater branding in the previous literature. Theater is more often regarded as a place where the audience meets with the performance, or a medium concept, and it is generally believed that the audience's attendance is mainly due to the performance programs and stars, and the factor of theater brand is not taken into account. On this basis, the author tries to analyze the interaction between the theater and the audience from the perspective of branding, and proposes management concepts that managers of branded theaters should consider in addition to performance content.

## References

[1] Addis M.,Holbrook M.On the conceptual link between mass customisation and experiential consumption:An explosion of subjectivity [J]. Journal of Consumer
[2] Ajzen,Fishbein. Attitude -behavior relations:A theoretical analysis and re- view of empirical research[J]. Psychological Bulletin,1977,84(5):888-918.
[3] Beckett. Collaborative network success and the variable nature of trust [J]. Production Planning & Control,2012,23(4):240-251.
[4] Berg U,Back R,Celsi G,et al. Comparison of plasma clearance of iohexol and urinary clearance of inulin for measurement of GFR in children [J]. Am J Kidney Dis,2011,57(1):55-61.
[5] Caves R.Creative industries:contracts between art and commerce [M]. Harvard University Press,2000.
[6] Chen, Zhen. H. Market-oriented business strategies for theaters [D]. Nanchang: Nanchang University, 2018.
[7] Cheng Xiao. (2017). Research on the management and operation of Chinese theaters (Doctoral dissertation, Shanghai Theatre Academy). https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=XRthMH6b-fm9YMuwhinxEecLfNtapgKiI-L4_ l2mlk96njniZFdsh8wXqd4fwYPc2LRodKZRUyB-yaJtQpsXH-UrAuWHNNr9cDvTEsO7HryDqTW_sB9p21u9Hdu05V5l25x61No-UZo=&uniplatform=NZKPT& language=CHS
[8] Dekker,J.et al. Elementaire marketing [M]. Zutphen:Thieme,1995.
[9] Engel JF,Blackwell R D,Kegerreis R J,et al.Word-of -mouth commu- nication by the innovator [J]. Journal of Marketing(pre- 1986),1986, (3):15-19.
[10] Feng Yu. Exploring the marketing strategy of Shanxi Grand Theatre under Poly Theatre Line [D]. Tianjin: Tianjin Conservatory of Music, 2015.
[11] Garbarino E.Johnson M.The different roles of satisfaction,trust,and com- mitment in

customer relationships [J]. Journal of Marketing,1999,63(2):70-88.179
[12] Garber et al. Consumer based strategic planning in the nonprofit sector:the empirical assessment of a symphony audience [J]. Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing,2000,8(1):55-86.
[13] Geng YW. Cambridge Introduction to Theatre Studies [M]. Taipei: Shu Lin Publishing Co.
[14] Gong Xiaoli. Exploration of the theater marketing model under the Internet thinking [J]. China Market. 2020(14): 127-128+134.
[15] Hill L. et al. Creative arts marketing [J]. Amsterdam:Butterworth -Heine- mann,2003.
[16] Hu Jie. Research on marketing strategy of Hangzhou theater [D]. Changchun: Jilin University, 2020.
[17] Huang Xin. Brand planning and marketing of Shanghai Lanxin Grand Theatre [D]. Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of Music, 2012.
[18] Hume M.Exploring repurchase intention in a performing arts context:who comes? and why do they come back?[J]. International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing,2007(12):135- 148.
[19] Jiang Tao. Brand building of theater [D]. Beijing: China Academy of Art, 2017.
[20] Kotler P.Scheff J. Standing room only:Strategies for marketing the Perform- ing Arts [M]. Boston:Harvard Business School Press,1997.
[21] Levy-Carboua L ,Montmarquette C. A microeconomic study of theatre de- mand. Journal of Cultural Economics,1996,20(1):25-50.
[22] Li Daozeng. Western Drama-Theatre History (Upper and Lower Books) [M]. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 1999.
[23] Li Jiangfeng. Discussion on marketing planning of theater [J]. Journal of Hunan University (Social Science Edition), 2000(S1):55-61.
[24] Liu Zhenya. Modern Theatre Design [M]. Beijing: China Construction Industry Press, 2000.
[25] Liu, Winding. (2006). Research on the business management model of Tian Han Grand Theatre (Master's thesis, Hunan University). https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=XRthMH6b-flXkLN6dZzOJfgHvAtmpCm1HrRcg2g3_ 4eqPxHHBbzQYWcepJBWsxb6H71WGsB0ZsPW6N88Pfq3SvnnE9zyRPbb-QZ2HgK4orowOECc8DgSeVAqH_ONrExf&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS
[26] Lu, Xiangdong & Zheng, Shenglan. (2010). The idea of establishing POE for theaters in China. Performing Arts Technology (06), 56-60.
[27] Luo Cheng. Research on the integrated marketing communication of Tian Han cultural brand of Tian Han Grand Theatre [D]. Hunan University, 2008.
[28] Luo Song. Outstanding Achievements in Deepening Reform of Zhizhi Theatre [J]. China Theatre, 1997: 22
[29] Ma Ming, Chen Mengdi. Research on the operation and management of Yangzhou New Theatre from the perspective of brand communication[J]. Art Education,2020,(01):43-46.
[30] Scheff Bernstein J. Arts Marketing Insights: The dynamics of building and re- taining arts audiences [J]. Jossey-Bass,2007.
[31] Seaman. B.A.Empirical studies of demand for the performing arts [M]// Victor A.Ginsburgh and David Throsby. Handbook of the economics of art and culture,North-Holland,2006:416-467.
[32] Sui Kexin. Research on the brand marketing strategy of traditional theaters in the

context of new media--Take Tao Li Mei Grand Theater as an example[J]. Modern Marketing (Lower Journal), 2018(03):52.
[33] Werck k.,Heyndels B.Programmatic choices and the demand for theatre: the case of flemish theatres [J]. Journal of Cultural Economics,2007 (31):25-41.
[34] Willis K.,Snowball,J. Investigating how the attributes of live theatre pro- ductions influence consumption choices using conjoint analysis:the example of the National Arts festival,South Africa [J]. Journal of Cultural Econom-ics,2009(33):167- 183.
[35] Xue, Lin-Ping. Traditional Chinese Theatre Architecture [M]. Beijing: China Construction Industry Press, 2009.
[36] Yang Ruiying. 2012-2017 Research on the market-oriented operation of Tianjin Grand Theatre [D]. Tianjin: Tianjin Conservatory of Music, 2018.
[37] Yu Xunlai. The history of China's cultural system reform and the evolution of development paths [D]. Doctoral dissertation, Jilin University, 2014.12
[38] Yuan Jun. The key to theater branding - establishing the branded repertoire of theaters [J]. Finance and Economics (Academic Edition), 2010(24):93-94.
[39] Zhai Qun. China Puppet Art Theatre is revitalized by the restructuring of the enterprise [N]. China Culture News, 2011.08.02,08 Edition
[40] Zhang Ruiqi. Study on the Spatial Changes and Operation Management of Large-scale Cultural Performing Arts Facilities since the Founding of the People's Republic of China [D]. Master's thesis, East China Normal University, Shanghai, 2011: 34
[41] Zhou Quanhua. A brief overview of 30 years of cultural system reform in the new period[J]. Guihai Series, 2011.02:9
[42] Zhu Jintang. Walt Disney's Grand Theater [D]. Shanghai: Shanghai International Studies University, 2019.