

# **A Research Project on Marketing and Communication Strategies for the Development of a World-class Ice and Snow Brand in Jilin Province**

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**Abstract:** Jilin Province, one of China's regions with the greatest abundance of snow and ice resources, offers significant potential for the development of snow and ice tourism. In light of the accelerated growth and ongoing expansion of the snow and ice tourism market in recent years, Jilin Province is proactively striving to establish a world-class, influential snow and ice brand. This initiative is designed to attract a greater number of overseas tourists, thereby fostering the overall prosperity and development of the regional economy. This paper presents a scientific exploration and summary of the marketing and communication strategies employed by Jilin Province in the process of ice and snow branding. The research methodology employed was a combination of literature research, field surveys, data collection and analysis, and classic case analysis. A comprehensive research program can provide accurate data on market demand, theoretical support, and practical guidance for the branding and communication of ice and snow tourism in Jilin Province. This research can also inform the development of a distinctive city brand.

**Keywords:** Jilin Province; World-class Ice and Snow Brand; Marketing; Communication Strategy

## **1. Introduction**

The tourism industry has witnessed a notable expansion of ice and snow tourism across the globe in recent years. This phenomenon has been particularly pronounced in countries and regions endowed with abundant snow and ice resources, where snow and ice tourism has emerged as a significant contributor to economic growth. Nations such as Switzerland,

Canada, and Japan have effectively leveraged their brand identity and marketing strategies to attract a substantial number of international tourists, thereby stimulating local economic activity. China, a vast country with a diverse range of natural landscapes, also possesses a wealth of ice and snow tourism resources.

## **2. A Review of the Domestic and International Research Status**

### **2.1 Development Status and Trend of Ice and Snow Branding at Home and Abroad**

As time has passed, ice and snow tourism has entered a period of growth. This growth is characterized by the gradual development of ice and snow tourism resources and the enhancement of brand awareness. Tourism operators begin to recognize the importance of brand image, gradually focusing on brand building and beginning to systematically shape brand image and market promotion. In this phase, the development of snow and ice tourism resources shifts from the mere exploitation of natural resources to a comprehensive tourism experience. Concurrently, the brand image emerges, and the market influence is also enhanced.

The development of snow and ice tourism brands on a global scale has demonstrated the following trends. The process of brand positioning is becoming increasingly refined and specialized. The construction of brands is no longer based solely on the exploitation of natural resources. Instead, it is focused on the provision of differentiated and personalised tourism experiences, achieved through an in-depth understanding of market demand and the refined positioning of target customers. The internationalization of ice and snow brands has emerged as a significant trend in the industry. The advent of the international

tourism market and the diversification of tourists' needs have prompted ice and snow brands to pursue international influence through international marketing and cross-border cooperation. In the context of brand building, there is a growing emphasis on sustainable development<sup>[1]</sup>. The concept of environmental protection and sustainable development has become an integral aspect of ice and snow brands. By prioritizing the conservation of natural resources and minimizing their environmental impact, these brands are able to enhance their social responsibility and reputation.

## 2.2 Successful Case Analysis

The development experience of Swiss ski resorts provides an illustrative example of the effective strategy of brand building for ice and snow tourism. The combination of Switzerland's distinctive natural resources and its well-developed tourism service facilities has positioned the country as a global model for snow and ice tourism. The Swiss brand-building strategy is centered on the promotion of high-quality ski resorts and a diverse range of skiing activities. These efforts have been successful in attracting a significant number of international tourists, thereby enhancing the overall quality of the skiing experience. In Switzerland, ski resorts are equipped with cutting-edge, well-maintained facilities to ensure the safety of skiers and provide a comfortable skiing experience. The skiing activities available at Swiss resorts are diverse, encompassing everything from introductory lessons for novice skiers to professional events for those with more advanced skills. The provision of optimal service facilities is also a significant contributing factor to the success of the Swiss ski brand. The accommodation, catering, entertainment, and other supporting services provided at Swiss ski resorts are of a high standard, offering tourists a comprehensive tourism experience. While brand building is primarily concerned with the provision of physical infrastructure, it also places significant emphasis on the quality of the services offered and the overall experience of the tourists<sup>[2]</sup>. By virtue of meticulous service and highly specialized management, Swiss ski resorts have succeeded in acquiring the reputation and loyalty of tourists.

Banff National Park in Canada provides an exemplar of an effective snow and ice branding strategy. Banff National Park is a tourist destination renowned for its natural beauty and suitability for a variety of snow sports. Banff National Park has effectively established a distinctive brand identity by integrating natural resources and offering a diverse range of tourism programs. The branding of Banff National Park is centered on the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Through rigorous scientific planning and management, the park protects the natural environment while simultaneously providing tourists with an exceptional tourism experience. The provision of diversified tourism programs constitutes an essential element in the brand-building process of Banff National Park. The park offers a plethora of snow and ice tourism programs, including skiing, snow and ice hiking, and ice fishing, catering to the diverse preferences of its visitors. The brand-building strategy prioritizes the diversification of tourism programs, emphasizing the quality and safety of these offerings. Professional management and services are employed to enhance the experience and satisfaction of tourists<sup>[3]</sup>.

## 3. Field Survey

### 3.1 Distribution and Quality of Ice and Snow Tourism Resources in Jilin Province

Jilin Province, situated in the northeastern region of China, boasts a plethora of exceptional snow and ice tourism resources. The region is endowed with a distinctive natural environment and climate, characterised by prolonged and inclement winters with copious snowfall, which have resulted in the formation of a plethora of natural snow and ice tourism resources. Changbai Mountain is the most representative ice and snow tourism destination in Jilin Province<sup>[4]</sup>. It is renowned for its impressive natural scenery and offers high-quality skiing facilities, making it an ideal destination for those with a passion for ice and snow sports. In contrast, Songhua Lake Ski Resort attracts a considerable number of tourists due to its distinctive lakeside and mountainous setting, as well as its exemplary skiing conditions. The results of the field investigation indicate that the snow and ice tourism resources in Jilin Province are

primarily concentrated in Changbai Mountain and its surrounding areas, forming a snow and ice tourism circle with Changbai Mountain as the core. The distribution of these resources is more centralized, which facilitates unified planning and management and enables the formation of a scale effect.

### **3.2 Progress and Effectiveness of Ice and Snow Branding in Jilin Province**

In order to establish Jilin Province as a globally renowned brand in the field of ice and snow, it is imperative to undertake comprehensive research into the most effective marketing and communication strategies. In this regard, field research is of paramount importance. Jilin Province is distinguished by its distinctive and plentiful snow and ice resources, exemplified by the region's characteristic freezing fog and its renowned snowy landscapes, particularly in Changchun. The number of visitors to Freezing Mist Island has exhibited a notable increase in recent years. To illustrate, during the 2023 winter season, the number of tourists who visited Freezing Mist Island increased by 30% compared to the previous season, reaching 150,000. This growth has not only led to an increase in local tourism revenues but has also had a positive impact on the development of neighboring businesses. From an economic benefit perspective, Jilin Province's direct revenue through snow and ice tourism reached RMB 500 million in 2023, representing a 25% increase compared to 2022<sup>[5]</sup>. This growth can be attributed to the implementation of effective marketing strategies and the provision of a high-quality visitor experience. To further enhance its economic performance, Jilin Province may wish to consider extending its promotional activities and utilising digital marketing tools to more accurately reach potential domestic and international tourists. With regard to the snow and ice branding activities in Jilin Province, it would be beneficial to introduce additional cultural elements alongside the traditional skiing and skating experiences. This could include the incorporation of events such as the Shaman Cultural Festival and the Chagan Lake Winter Fishing Festival. Such distinctive cultural events can serve to enhance the reputation of Jilin's ice and snow tourism brand, thereby attracting those tourists

who are seeking cultural experiences.

For example, the Winter Fishing Festival at Chagan Lake attracts over 20,000 visitors annually, and the Shaman Cultural Festival has experienced a 15% annual growth rate in participants. It is recommended that structural strategies be developed and implemented in a manner that builds upon and enhances the existing brand strength. At present, Jilin Province is acknowledged as a prominent brand in the field of ice and snow tourism within China. However, there is a need to enhance its visibility on the global stage. By forging alliances with international media outlets, establishing a regular schedule of international ice and snow festivals, and fostering stronger ties with world-renowned ice and snow tourism destinations, Jilin Province can effectively bolster its brand influence. The ice and snow tourism marketing and communication strategy for Jilin Province can be optimized further with the support of specific data and comprehensive field research. This will enable the province to build a world-class ice and snow tourism brand. Such an approach will not only stimulate economic growth but also serve to preserve and disseminate the region's cultural heritage on an international scale.

### **4. Deficiencies in Marketing and Communication for Building a World-Class Ice and Snow Brand in Jilin Province.**

The Jilin Province faces a number of significant challenges in developing a world-class ice and snow brand. Notwithstanding the province's abundant snow and ice resources, it continues to enjoy only limited visibility and appeal in the international market. This is primarily attributable to the absence of a comprehensive promotional strategy, particularly the dearth of promotional activities in the international market. This has resulted in a lack of awareness among potential foreign tourists regarding the ice and snow tourism resources available in Jilin Province. In comparison with world-class ice and snow tourism destinations, there is considerable scope for enhancement in Jilin's tourism infrastructure and service levels, including accommodation, transportation and multilingual services, which collectively influence the overall experience of tourists<sup>[6]</sup>. Despite the province's distinctive cultural

heritage, encompassing phenomena such as freezing fog and shamanism, the integration of these elements and the comprehensive exploration of their cultural implications remain inadequate, resulting in a lack of a compelling cultural draw. Despite the numerous ice and snow festivals held in Jilin Province, there is a notable absence of innovation and differentiation, which renders it challenging to distinguish itself amidst the multitude of similar activities. Moreover, there is a dearth of brand activities that can be regarded as iconic and possess international influence. These issues collectively impede the global promotion and market competitiveness of Jilin's ice and snow tourism brand.

Additionally, Jilin Province has been slow to adopt digital marketing strategies, particularly in the use of social media, digital advertising, and online travel platforms to promote its ice and snow tourism resources. In the current digital era, this strategic lag significantly impairs the ability of brands to disseminate information rapidly and expand their market presence. The acquisition and maintenance of international tourists relies on modern marketing methods, such as data analytics, which are used to identify target markets and customer preferences. However, it is evident that Jilin has underinvested and underinnovated in this area. Furthermore, the seasonal constraints on local snow and ice tourism have not been effectively addressed by marketing strategies, resulting in unequal resource utilization and benefits.

## **5. Specific Strategies for Marketing and Communication to Build a World-Class Ice and Snow Brand in Jilin Province**

### **5.1 User Data Analysis**

The application of big data technology to user data analysis can result in a notable enhancement of the precision of marketing initiatives. The analysis of tourist behavior data from 2021, 2022, and 2023 revealed a diversification in tourist travel preferences. In 2021, tourists exhibited a preference for short-term peripheral trips, representing approximately 45% of the total number of tourists. The most prevalent types of trips were self-driving and family trips, accounting for 32% and 28% of the total, respectively<sup>[7]</sup>. In 2022, the impact of the epidemic led to a shift

in preferences, with a notable rise in the popularity of domestic long-distance trips. The proportion of inter-provincial trips increased by 12 percentage points year-on-year, reaching 40%. Furthermore, data from social media platforms indicated that the number of views on videos about ice and snow tourism on the ShakeEn platform reached 120 million in 2021, increased to 150 million in 2022, and reached 200 million in 2023. This trend suggests that social media is becoming an increasingly influential factor in tourists' destination choices on an annual basis. With regard to expenditure patterns, the per capita spending of tourists on ice and snow tourism was approximately 3,000 yuan in 2021, rising to 3,500 yuan in 2022, and further increasing to 4,000 yuan in 2023. This indicates that the potential for expenditure in ice and snow tourism continues to be realized<sup>[8]</sup>. Furthermore, the analysis of social media interactions of tourists revealed that the amount of discussions about ice and snow tourism in Jilin Province on microblogging and WeChat platforms in 2023 reached 1. This represents an increase of 50% and 40%, respectively, compared to 2021. In light of the aforementioned data, it is imperative to develop a personalized marketing strategy. The introduction of diversified tourism products, including high-end customized tours, parent-child tours, and student group tours, can facilitate the provision of tailored experiences to meet the diverse needs and preferences of tourists across different consumption levels. The promotion of the brand via social media and travel bloggers can enhance its influence and attract a greater number of young tourists.

In the contemporary era of accelerated advancement in information technology, the "Internet +" concept has become an indispensable marketing instrument for a diverse array of sectors, particularly in the context of promoting ice and snow tourism. This is due to the fact that the Internet has become an integral component of modern marketing strategies, offering a vast array of opportunities for brands to connect with their target audiences in innovative ways. In order to more effectively utilize and integrate network resources, it is essential to integrate "Internet +" and ice and snow tourism brands in a comprehensive manner, with the objective

of promoting the transformation and upgrading of the brand and ensuring its sustainable development. By developing a range of online platforms, including the creation of dedicated APP promotional channels, we can not only significantly enhance the visibility of Jilin's snow and ice tourism brand, but also facilitate the emergence of numerous new snow and ice tourism brands. This will enable the appeal of Jilin's snow and ice to be disseminated globally through digital platforms, attracting a greater number of tourists to experience it first-hand.

### 5.2 Real-time Monitoring and Feedback

The real-time tracking of market responses through the use of intelligent monitoring tools is of paramount importance in order to ensure the effectiveness of promotional strategies. From 2021 to 2023, the tourism sector in Jilin Province employed a range of intelligent monitoring tools, including the Baidu Index and the WeChat Index, to gain insight into market dynamics in real time. The data indicate that the Baidu search index for the keyword "Jilin Ice and Snow Tourism" was 30,000 times/day in 2021, increased to 45,000 times/day in 2022, and further increased to 60,000 times/day in 2023. This suggests that market attention is increasing on an annual basis. The WeChat Index, which measures the search volume of the keyword "Jilin Ice and Snow," reached 18,000 times/day in 2021, 23,000 times/day in 2022, and 30,000 times/day in 2023<sup>[9]</sup>. These data allow for the timely adjustment of promotional strategies. For instance, in early 2022, following the identification of a notable increase in searches pertaining to "family ice and snow tours," a series of family packages and parent-child activities were promptly introduced, resulting in a notable enhancement in tourist satisfaction and repeat rates. To illustrate, at the outset of 2023, the monitoring of the Shake platform revealed a surge in interest in the topic of "extreme skiing." In response, the company collaborated with professional ski clubs to launch high-difficulty skiing programs, which proved highly attractive to a significant number of skiing enthusiasts. There was a 15% increase in the proportion of respondents who indicated that they were interested in extreme skiing, rising from 78%

to 93%<sup>[10]</sup>. This rapid response mechanism ensured the accuracy and timeliness of marketing, continuously optimized promotion strategies, and improved marketing efficiency.

### 5.3 The Creation of Distinctive Brand Narratives

In the process of brand story building, it is of particular importance to create a brand story with local characteristics by combining Jilin's history, culture, and ice and snow resources. In 2021, Jilin Province launched an ice and snow tourism promotional film with the theme of Manchu culture. This film demonstrated the ideal fusion of traditional Manchu culture and modern ice and snow sports, gaining significant attention both domestically and abroad. Its broadcasting volume reached 30 million, making it the highlight of the year. In 2022, The Jilin Province government further developed the brand story by producing a documentary entitled "The Wonderful Fate of Ice and Snow - Jilin Chapter." This film, which was broadcast on the Chinese Central Television (CCTV) network and streamed on Tencent Video, Youku, and other online platforms, reached over 100 million viewers by the end of 2022<sup>[11]</sup>. In 2023, the Jilin Province sought to enhance the international influence of the brand by inviting renowned Hollywood directors and actors to participate in the filming of a motion picture on the subject of ice and snow. The film was released globally and amassed a cumulative box office revenue exceeding 1 billion yuan. Additionally, it garnered the Best Film Award at an international film festival. The utilisation of film, television, and documentaries enabled Jilin Province to disseminate the ice and snow culture on an international scale, attract a significant number of domestic and foreign tourists, and further enhance the brand's popularity and reputation.

### 5.4 Integration of Cultural Activities

The incorporation of cultural activities represents a significant strategy for enhancing the brand's cultural connotation and attractiveness. In 2021, Jilin Province successfully hosted the inaugural International Ice and Snow Festival, attracting tourists and performance teams from over 30 countries. The event attracted one million tourists and generated a direct economic income of 500

million yuan. In 2022, Jilin Province hosted an Ice and Snow Art Exhibition in Changchun City, showcasing ice and snow sculptures and artwork from around the globe. The number of visitors exceeded 500,000, and the revenue generated by the tourism industry during the art exhibition exhibited a 20% increase compared to the previous year. In 2023, Jilin Province elevated cultural activities to a new level by organizing the World Ice and Snow Cultural Exchange Conference. The conference brought together globally renowned ice and snow artists and scholars for academic exchanges and the display of their works, attracting over 2,000 experts and scholars. This resulted in a record-high number of participants and the event's significant impact. In the process of integrating cultural activities, Jilin Province places an emphasis on combining local characteristics with innovative forms of activity. For example, during the 2023 Ice and Snow Festival, the province introduced the "Manchu style" as the theme of the ice and snow garden and Manchu ice and snow costumes exhibition, which proved to be a popular attraction among tourists, with a total of 300,000 participants. By virtue of organizing a series of international and specialized cultural activities, Jilin Province continues to hold a series of international and specialized cultural activities.

By organizing a series of internationalized and unique cultural activities, Jilin Province has continuously enhanced the cultural connotation and attractiveness of its brand, attracted a large number of domestic and foreign tourists, and improved the comprehensive income and brand influence of the tourism industry. The data indicates that the average annual growth rate of the total number of tourists and tourism revenue of ice and snow tourism in Jilin Province will reach 15% and 18%, respectively, from 2021 to 2023. This is largely attributable to the integration of brand storytelling and cultural activities, which have become a significant force in promoting the ice and snow brand of Jilin Province on the global stage.

### **5.5 Strengthen the Development of Ice and Snow Experiential Tourism Products**

The ice and snow equipment manufacturing industry serves as a crucial foundation for the

advancement of the ice and snow economy. The production, processing, and industrial upgrading of ice and snow equipment represents a significant component of the development of the ice and snow economy. The ice and snow equipment manufacturing industry is technically challenging, offers significant industrial value-added, and presents promising prospects for broad development. Presently, the ice and snow equipment manufacturing industry in Jilin Province is still in its nascent stages of development, grappling with challenges pertaining to scientific and technological research, the inadequacy of the standard technical system, the lack of optimization in the industrial chain, and other issues. A significant number of production enterprises are deficient in both the fundamental technological capabilities and the capacity for innovation. In recent years, the market for snow-making equipment has become increasingly competitive. In order to adapt to market changes, Jilin enterprises have engaged in extensive cooperative endeavours with advanced enterprises at home and abroad. Subsequently, considerable optimism has been expressed and significant initiatives have been undertaken, resulting in a notable acceleration in the development of the snow and ice equipment manufacturing industry.

### **5.6 The objective is to Establish New Quality Producers**

To enhance the snow and ice industry, it is imperative to initiate the process by developing and fostering the growth of market-leading entities. It is imperative to prioritize the involvement of foreign enterprises while simultaneously fostering the growth and resilience of local enterprises. To achieve this, it is essential to create an environment that is conducive to the expansion and advancement of private enterprises. It is recommended that innovative science and technology enterprises be encouraged to increase their investment in the ice and snow industry. It is imperative to facilitate the growth of leading backbone enterprises, the formation of leading enterprises driven by the industrial supply chain, and the expansion of the ice and snow industry chain, value chain, and innovation chain as soon as possible. It is recommended

that investment be made in regional industries with the aim of integrating ice and snow tourism projects into a unified group, thereby facilitating the deep integration of physical, cultural, and transmission tourism.

### 5.7 Internet Innovation Communication Channels

In the current era, the rapid development of 5G networks has led to a situation in which short videos are disseminated on online platforms with greater efficiency than was previously the case with traditional communication channels. In terms of content creation, short videos are presented with a greater degree of wit and humor, incorporating a diverse array of images. This approach enhances the creativity and personalization of the information content, effectively capturing the audience's attention and fostering a deeper recall and understanding of the brand associated with ice and snow tourism in Jilin Province. Furthermore, the short video can be disseminated on other platforms with a single click, thereby facilitating large-scale secondary dissemination.

Moreover, the virtual animation image, ice and snow tourism promotional video, and other promotional videos representing ice and snow tourism in Jilin Province can be played on the ice and snow tourism information platform. This approach allows for the expansion of brand image dissemination and the promotion of ice and snow tourism in Jilin Province.

### 6. Conclusion

China's snow and ice tourism industry is currently undergoing a period of rapid expansion, yet it remains an emerging sector. The level of participation from the general public is relatively low, with 80% of visitors being novices. In order to promote the ice and snow tourism industry on a larger and more robust scale, the Northeast can benefit from the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei ecological ice and snow regionalization development model. By transcending the limitations imposed by administrative divisions, fostering regional collaboration, integrating ice and snow tourism resources, and establishing a framework for synergistic development, the Northeast can establish the Northeast Ice and Snow Tourism Circle and launch a series of joint snow and ice tourism activities. This

approach can help avoid the homogenization of their respective development issues. In order to establish their own tourism boutique, a unified regional publicity theme, common market development, information sharing, the establishment of barrier-free tourism areas, and a new pattern of regional cooperation in ice and snow tourism, it is necessary to create a balanced development model for the ice and snow industry in the North.

It is anticipated that in the future, Jilin Province will have significant potential in the field of snow and ice tourism. By proactively soliciting international investment, Jilin Province can not only markedly enhance the modernization of its infrastructure and service quality, but also expedite in-depth collaboration with internationally esteemed ski resorts and tour operators. By collaborating with these international partners to develop and promote distinctive snow and ice tourism initiatives, we can not only utilize their global influence to rapidly increase the international recognition of the Jilin snow and ice brand, but also enhance the brand's attractiveness and reputation through joint promotional activities, thereby further developing the international market. On this basis, we will optimize the construction and promotion strategy of the Jilin snow and ice brand in all aspects, from brand positioning to service management. This will be done by drawing on the valuable experience of successful international snow and ice brands such as Switzerland. The goal is to enhance the comprehensive competitiveness of the brand and make Jilin's snow and ice glamour shine on the world stage.

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