

Original Paper

Research on How Internet Celebrity Food Goes out of the Circle to Help Local Economic Development Based on the Barbecue Phenomenon in Zibo

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Abstract

In recent years, with the rise of the Internet, the Internet celebrity economy has developed vigorously, gradually penetrating into various fields such as social networking, e-commerce, and live broadcasting, and various types of Internet celebrity economic products have emerged in endlessly. Internet celebrity food makes full use of the advantages of new media platforms to promote the development of local economy. Although most of the existing literature believes that Internet celebrity food is the key to boosting urban development, most scholars study Internet celebrity food alone or from the perspective of helping economic development. There are few documents that combine the two to study the emergence of Internet celebrity food. The reasons for the circle and the mechanism to promote local economic development. This article takes Zibo Barbecue as the research object to explore the factors that lead to the prosperity of this Internet celebrity food and its future development model, thereby helping local economic development and providing relevant optimization paths for this purpose.

Keywords

Zibo Barbecue, internet celebrity economy, government, enterprises, suggested countermeasures

1. Introduction

In the context of the rapid development of the digital economy, the popularity of the Internet and the rise of social media have gradually penetrated into all aspects of life, especially the cultural tourism industry. The popularization of the Internet and the rise of social media have injected impetus for rapid

development into Internet hot cities (referred to as "Internet celebrity cities"), and traffic has become the cornerstone of a city's rapid development. With the help of the Internet and social media, Internet celebrity cities have attracted the attention of a large number of tourists with their unique cultural charm, tourism resources, food characteristics, etc., and have become the new favorites of the tourism market. The Internet celebrity economy that emerged as a result has driven the development of the achievement economy and publicity (Shao, 2023). After the Internet celebrity traffic has passed, how to retain the popularity and achieve a qualitative upgrade from instant network-based traffic to permanent retention of urban celebrities is undoubtedly an important challenge faced by current cultural tourism marketing. The city's "explosion" cannot stop at a flash in the pan. Maintaining its "long-lasting popularity" is the key to the city's future construction direction.

Zibo Barbecue exploded in popularity in 2023, receiving more than 4.8 million foreign tourists, firing the first shot at the Internet celebrity region's economy in 2023, rapidly transforming from an old industrial city into a must-have place for Internet celebrities. The IP of "Zibo Barbecue" It has been popular on the short video platform for a long time, and tourists from all over the country have come one after another. The "BBQ economy" once exploded, providing a perfect answer for the successive explosions in Harbin, Gansu and other places. However, as the popularity of the Internet dissipated, the popularity of Zibo barbecue gradually "cooled" after the May Day holiday. In July, the average daily reception volume of Zibo barbecue shops on working days was only about 30% of the peak of the May Day holiday. There was a brief peak during the National Day period, but the turnover in November was only a quarter of that in May (Song, 2023). How to make "Internet celebrities" become "long-lasting", Zibo Barbecue has sufficient research value.

2. Reasons for the Explosion of Barbecue in Zibo

2.1 Government Services Build Strong Faith and People-Friendly Policies Are Correctly Guided

Seize the opportunity, ensure orderliness, and play the two-way role of "effective market and promising government". After "Zibo BBQ" became popular, tourists from all over the country came in droves. As "the greater the popularity, the greater the popularity, the greater the economic pull", the cost of careful maintenance is getting higher and higher, and the pressure to ensure services is also increasing; this tests a city's wisdom in maintaining its own brand, and even tests It determines whether a city's governance system and governance capabilities have reached modernization. The Zibo government responded quickly, opening 24 more "barbecue special trains", adding 21 new bus lines, providing students with free or half-price youth hostel accommodation, and strengthening security patrols.

The government leads and the society works together to build a grand blueprint for Zibo cultural tourism. Under the organization of the Zibo government, all departments such as industry and commerce, administration, culture and tourism, social security, food safety, and fire safety have jointly launched the "BBQ Escort Action" to strengthen the market-oriented management of the barbecue industry, including store management, hotel management, Ingredients management, quality

management and price management, etc. In Zibo, the strong sense of humanity exuded from top to bottom has inspired the local people's sense of unity and honor. Everyone "works hard in one place", cooks barbecue carefully, and provides considerate services. From the government to the citizens Surprisingly, no one dropped the chain. In essence, Zibo can become popular, and barbecue is just a "prop". The improvement of urban public service capabilities with service as the core is the core that promotes this two-way rush.

2.2 Build a Brand with Honest Management and Improve Service and Quality Control

It is good at innovation, explores the heritage, and creates a resounding brand of "Zibo, the city of great food and culture". Netizens commented that "one table, one oven and one burrito" is the soul of Zibo barbecue. The small stove represents the temperature of the city, the small pancakes represent the city's tolerance, and the green onions represent the generosity of Shandong people. This unique "soul way of eating" , not only gives people a strong visual impact, but also makes tourists linger and want to stop after tasting it. Today's cultural and tourism consumers increasingly favor high-quality, distinctive, and scene-based products and content. Compared with the scenery during the journey, many people tend to pay more attention to the feelings during the journey, which truly contributes to the continued popularity of "Zibo Barbecue" The key lies in the rapid follow-up of its supporting services (Hu & Song, 2023).

Operate with integrity, ensure quality, and polish the golden sign of "Hospitable Shandong and Good Shandong Products". In order to keep the popularity of "Zibo BBQ" and maintain its effect, the Zibo BBQ industry always adheres to clearly marked prices, honest management, adheres to "the quality cannot be reduced, and the characteristics cannot be lost", resolutely adheres to the bottom line of food hygiene and food safety, and wholeheartedly improves tourists' satisfaction. Experience and satisfaction can truly turn "traffic" into "retention". A blogger with tens of millions of fans on a short video platform came to Zibo with his own scale to "check in (fake)". He visited 10 stores and found no shortage of pounds. He was "impressed" by the honest management of Zibo people. Hospitality with sincerity is the foundation of "Hospitable Shandong" and the "secret" that turns "Internet celebrity place" into "Changhong Township" (Meng, 2023).

2.3 BBQ Innovation Attracts Tourists, and Online Publicity Helps Promote It

It has received constant praise and word of mouth, and tourists have become the ambassadors of Zibo Barbecue. Tourists used methods such as taking photos, checking in, and creating creative videos to spread spontaneously on self-media and short video platforms, which also effectively promoted the popularity of Zibo Barbecue out of the circle. According to data from the publicity evaluation system of Dazhong.com, there have been hundreds of thousands of messages related to "Zibo Barbecue" so far. The topic has been popular for a long time, *and public opinion has continued to pay attention to the discussion, forming a large network traffic.*

As for why "college students organized a group to take the high-speed train to Zibo to get skewers" in early March, it was on Douyin's hot search in the same city. In February 2023, the Zibo Youth League

Municipal Committee innovatively organized more than 260 chemical engineering students from eight universities in Shandong Province to "come to Zibo to experience", the experience is employment-oriented, including company observation, but also involves food, clothing, housing, transportation, history and humanities. Many of the students went to have barbecue under the guidance of their teachers, and they couldn't help but "show off" to their classmates and alumni on the Internet. Then Zibo Barbecue began to spread among young students. After that, college students from all over the country flocked to Zibo, and the topic "College students organized a group to eat barbecue in Zibo" once topped Douyin's hot search list in the city.

2.4 Warm Reception, Warm and Honest, Sincerity and Simplicity Win Trust

According to survey data analysis, more than 60% of Zibo residents are native Zibo people. Even those who have moved to Zibo from other places have mostly settled in Zibo for more than ten years. As for foreign tourists, more than 80% of local residents in Zibo are able to actively provide help, provide convenience, and be friendly to foreign tourists. Urban development not only requires the efforts of the city, but also requires the local residents and enterprises to work together, work together, and move forward together. For Zibo barbecue business vendors, more than 70% fully agree that they can effectively listen to feedback from consumers, improve product quality, and innovate products. Only by constantly communicating and improving with consumers can businesses develop sustainably and make continuous progress. Zibo Barbecue We have done this, being with consumers, offering affordable prices, and listening to their opinions. The vendors spontaneously want to give consumers a better consumption experience and have a sense of collective honor for Zibo Barbecue. This is why Zibo Barbecue has always been popular. Lasts forever (Feng, 2024).

3. The Mechanism of Zibo Barbecue to Help Local Economic Development

3.1 Vitality of the Private Economy

Zibo barbecue is mainly operated by private enterprises, among which small, medium and micro enterprises are the main force in the market. These enterprises not only promote the development of the local barbecue industry, but also drive the development of agriculture, animal husbandry, processing industry, logistics industry and other related industries, create a large number of jobs, and play a positive role in improving residents' income levels and promoting employment stability.

3.2 High-Quality Services and Urban Culture

The success of Zibo Barbecue also benefits from the local's warm and considerate, humane service attitude and urban culture. The Zibo Municipal Government and citizens have worked together to provide high-quality and convenient services, such as the construction of landscape roads, a new barbecue city and free parking lots, as well as a volunteer team formed by citizens to provide tourism promotion services to tourists. These initiatives not only enhance the city's attractiveness, but also promote the gathering and continuation of traffic.

3.3 The Power of Regional Culture

The popularity of Zibo barbecue also reflects the importance of regional culture. Qilu culture with Confucianism as its core advocates honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, filial piety and justice. This cultural characteristic has played an important role in the popularity of Zibo barbecue. The regional culture of integrity and hospitality has deepened people's favorability and recognition of the "Hospitality Shandong" brand, and promoted the economic development of Shandong Province.

3.4 The role of New Media

With the development of information technology, new media platforms have become an important tool for regional image dissemination. Zibo Barbecue has achieved exponential growth in popularity in a short period of time through interactive communication on Douyin, Weibo, Xiaohongshu and other platforms, becoming a product of the new media era.

The popularity of Zibo Barbecue has implications for regional economic development including: supporting the private economy to enhance the innovative vitality and high-quality development of the regional economy; maintaining honest operations and high-quality services to maintain market attractiveness; and using regional cultural characteristics and new media platforms to enhance City branding and attractiveness.

4. Analysis of Problems and Causes of Barbecue Explosions in Zibo

4.1 Serious Homogenization Phenomenon

Zibo's tourism products are single and highly homogeneous, its cultural tourism consumption scenarios are single, it lacks a diversified cultural tourism product matrix, and it is unable to meet tourists' differentiated and diversified leisure travel experience needs. What is exposed behind this is Zibo's local single industrial structure. As a traditional heavy industrial city, Zibo has a high proportion of traditional industries and faces the dilemma of transforming into an industrial city. From March to June, more than 450 new barbecue restaurants opened in Zibo. However, after the May Day holiday, hundreds of barbecue restaurant transfer advertisements have appeared, whether online transfer information or local popular shops in Zibo, most of which indicate that they are still in business, with transfer fees ranging from hundreds of thousands to 35,000 yuan. Ranging from one hundred thousand.

4.2 Unbalanced Rhythm of Life

Excessive tourists have poured into the Zibo area. The roads in Zibo City are narrow, and a large number of foreign vehicles and private cars have poured in, causing road congestion, hindering local transportation, and causing inconvenience to the lives and travel of the indigenous people. For online car-hailing and taxi drivers, work tasks have increased. The surge in foreign tourists has increased driver pressure and squeezed free time; it is difficult to get a ticket in Zibo, and local shared trams are unevenly distributed in the area, making it inconvenient for local residents to travel.

4.3 Frequent Malicious Competition

Enterprises lack strict supervision in the procurement, processing, storage and other aspects of food ingredients, resulting in higher food safety risks. Due to fierce competition in the industry, some businesses have adopted the practice of lowering service quality in order to attract customers. For example, the waiter has a bad attitude, is slow in serving food, and does not take the initiative to provide tableware, etc. These problems have seriously affected consumers' dining experience and lowered the overall image of Zibo Barbecue.

4.4 Carrying Capacity Is in Short Supply

Zibo's permanent population in 2022 was 4.7 million, but it received more than 4.8 million foreign tourists in March 2023. The number of tourists received in a month exceeded the local resident population, far exceeding Zibo's reception capacity and market carrying capacity. It is hard to find a hotel room for the weekend in Zibo. The owner of the barbecue restaurant has sold out the meat dishes at lunch time and advised netizens not to come. Queues for dinner start at 4 o'clock. Some Internet celebrity attractions have to adopt traffic restrictions to control excessive passenger flow. "Top-level" Zibo has gained unprecedented business opportunities, but it is also undergoing tests.

The popularity of barbecue in Zibo has also brought about practical problems. Whether it is the pressure on accommodation or the pressure on the city's carrying capacity, it has exceeded the acceptable range in Zibo. The staff of barbecue shops have two to three hours of rest every day, one week. After losing 20 pounds, local barbecue companies are also moving forward. At the same time, famous scenic spots or internet celebrity check-in spots are crowded with tourists from all over the world, most of whom come to have barbecues on weekends, such as Zhoucun Ancient City and Zhongshuge. Due to the large number of people, Zhongshuge could only take measures to limit the flow of visitors, waiting for a group of tourists to come out before letting another group of tourists in.

5. Countermeasures for the Long-Term Development of Zibo Barbecue to Lead the Economy

5.1 The Government Should Play the Role of Macro-Control and Grasp Consumer Preferences

1) Highlight regulatory focus and standardize price behavior

Combined with local tourism characteristics, we will make precise efforts to focus on popular scenic spots and internet celebrity check-in spots, and increase supervision and inspection efforts. The first is to focus on key areas, focus on first-line tourist hotspots, strengthen inspections of service industries in key areas such as major scenic spots and commercial districts, and supervise operators to strictly implement clearly stated price regulations to ensure that the price tags are complete, the price tags are true, and the goods are The signs should be aligned and the signs should be eye-catching to curb operators' illegal risks. The second is to urge all types of operators to follow the principles of openness, fairness and good faith and carry out self-examination and self-correction in a timely manner. For goods and services priced by the government, we must strictly implement and consciously publicize them; for goods and services such as catering and accommodation with market-adjusted prices, we

must make reasonable use of the independent pricing authority granted by the law, comply with market laws, and actively fulfill social obligations. responsibility and jointly maintain the balance of supply and demand in the tourism market (Jia, 2024).

2) Explain policies well and respond to tourists' concerns

The government should use its heart and soul to respond to public opinion. On the one hand, it builds a closed-loop management of tourist complaints, verification, law enforcement, rectification, and feedback to promptly respond to tourist concerns; on the other hand, it reminds tourists to pay attention to identification through WeChat public accounts, portals, text messages, etc. Consumption hazards. If you book a hotel through the Internet, you must check the information, confirm it in time, and protect your rights reasonably. You must take screenshots of the website's promotional page and order information to prevent the store from temporarily increasing prices. At the same time, we patiently and meticulously explain the policies and provide tourists with rational suggestions, thereby improving tourists' travel experience.

5.2 Enterprises Should Pay Attention to User Interaction Needs and Promote New Interaction Models

1) Product Service and Design

Tourists have become accustomed to common Internet celebrity products and services and lack a sense of uniqueness and novelty. Therefore, when companies design scenic spot products and services, they should give them certain added value, so that check-in groups can show their unique taste, hobbies, interests, or gain recognition and praise from others through the consumption of Internet celebrity products and services. Internet celebrity check-in destinations can be combined with actual conditions to formulate differentiated marketing strategies for Internet celebrity products and services. For example, we focus on "eating, drinking, playing and having fun" at the check-in points of Internet celebrities, focusing on the innovation of scenic spots, food and beauty, various entertainment facilities and activities, and at the same time giving them special symbolic meanings. In the end, when consuming the same type of products and services, tourists can show their differences in consumption ability and taste, bringing people unique experience and value.

2) Ceremony Design

Consumers' behavior of checking in with Internet celebrities on online media can positively affect people's travel intentions through group identification. Tourist destinations can design unique ritual activity scripts and use social platforms to quickly spread and promote them, create hot topics that can attract the attention of young consumers, and create different types of groups that engage in attraction check-in ritual activities to help them understand Position yourself and find the group to which you belong. Make good use of the differences and boundaries between different groups to strengthen the sense of identity and belonging of the target group.

5.3 Properly Use Consumers' Consumption Rationality and Technical Rationality to Promote the Healthy Development of Internet Celebrity Cultural Tourism City Brand Building

1) Use mental accounting to promote consumers' purchasing behavior

Mental accounting theory believes that people's psychological cognitive process in decision-making is the result of weighing "costs and benefits". Therefore, this article believes that it can not only affect the evaluation of gains and losses by directly changing the "perceived value" of products by consumers, but , and can also affect the trade-off results by changing the degree of connection between costs and benefits. For example, companies can weaken the link between consumption and payment by providing "credit card payment", "mobile payment" and other online payment methods, reduce the "pain" of payment, and increase purchase intention (Yang, Huang, & Wang, 2023).

2) Pay attention to the differences in price sensitivity of consumers

According to the previous research, it can be seen that consumers with different economic levels have different satisfaction with tourism. Therefore, tourism manufacturers should develop different marketing strategies for different target groups. On the one hand, tourism companies can understand tourists' consumption habits and preferences through big data. For those tourists with low price sensitivity, they can provide them with overall convenient travel packages, thereby changing their psychological perceptions of costs and benefits. knowledge process and promote the generation of consumer behavior. For those tourists with high price sensitivity, since price factors play an important role in their decision-making process, they should be provided with double-difference promotional products with cash offers and discounts (Zhang & Mao, 2024).

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