

# The Shaping of Urban Image in Short Videos in the New Era - Taking Xi'an as an Example

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**Abstract:** In the era of “Internet+”, the media that information technology affects social information dissemination has changed, and short videos in new media dissemination have gradually become the most popular method of communication. In the dissemination of short videos, it is possible to strengthen relationships between people and allow those who do not have enough time to go out to learn about the world through short videos. As a city with a rich historical heritage, Xi'an ranks very high among the cities all over the world. In order to better promote this cultural city and make it more well-known to everyone, this article studies the shaping of the image of Xi'an in short videos, in order to find effective ways to shape the image of Xi'an and provide new ideas for the cultivation of urban image in the new era.

**Keywords:** short videos; urban image shaping; Xi'an

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## 1. The Characteristics of Xi'an Shaped by Short Videos

In the era of “Internet+”, media are emerging in an endless stream, enabling people to realize their desire to see the world without leaving home. The emergence of short videos provides an opportunity for information transmission. Through short videos, the distance between cities has been narrowed, and the dissemination of urban images through film and television has been developed. What is visual communication? Visual communication is the visual presentation of a simulated environment through mass media, it has the characteristics of long dissemination time, strong visual effects, and multiple forms.

### 1.1 City of History

Xi'an, also known as Chang'an in ancient times, in which there are the most dynasties and longest history, and it is also the starting point of the widely known Silk Road. There are also rich historical and cultural heritages in Xi'an. The State Council has designated Xi'an as a national historical and cultural city, and the United Nations has also designated Xi'an as a world historical city. As the birthplace of Chinese civilization, Xi'an became an important place for foreign trade during the Tang Dynasty, maintaining economic and cultural interaction with other Asian and European countries. The background set of TV play *The Longest Day in Chang'an*, which was released in 2019, was set in Xi'an during the Tang Dynasty. The commerce and culture presented in the play were a replica of the prosperity of Xi'an at that time. The director designed a magnificent scene for the Hungry Ghost Festival rally, and also showed cultural elements such as the Dragon View, Persian Temple, and the ancient city wall, so that the audience could feel the prosperity and city culture of Xi'an at that time through the TV play. This method of showcasing the cultural heritage of the city through film and television has brought an intuitive feeling to the audience. For example, in the TV play *Qin Dynasty Epic*, the description of the majesty and bravery of the Qin people, the awe inspiring power of Qin's unification of the whole country, is also the source of the indomitable spirit of the modern people of Xi'an. In the new era, as a popular tourist city with many historical attractions such as the Emperor Qin's Terra-cotta Warriors, Weiyang Palace, Chang'an Palace, Xianyang Palace and so on, Xi'an shows the cultural implications of the long history for modern people, and makes modern people feel the humanities thousands of years ago. Therefore, Xi'an attracted more and more people to travel.

### 1.2 City of Humanities

As one of the birthplaces of traditional Chinese culture, Xi'an is rich in cultural resources such as music, dance, calligraphy and other aspects. it is a great significance in the cultural and artistic circles and plays an crucial role in the development of modern literature and

art. Xi'an has continued its profound cultural deposits and for thousands of years, Xi'an has remained a holy land of traditional operas, folk customs, and culinary culture. Qinqiang Opera has been inherited and made innovations in Xi'an, it has been integrated with other cultures, changing the traditional performance mode and combining with 3D movies, TV programs and other media, so that Qinqiang Opera and Qinqiang Opera artists can be known by more people, and new ideas can be opened for the inheritance of Qinqiang Opera. For example, the eight oddities in Guanzhong were promoted through short videos to let more outsiders know, and some people came to Xi'an to taste the delicious food. The TV play *The Backstage Clan* showcases the daily lives of the people in Xi'an. It also presents scenic spots such as the Daming Palace Ruins Park, and introduces Xi'an's specialties and local dialects. Through the TV play, the image of the people of Xi'an as forthright and hospitable is depicted, which is the best explanation for Xi'an as a city of humanities.

## **2. Difficulties in Shaping the Image of Xi'an**

### **2.1 Many Private Short Video Accounts**

After the author's collection and research, it was found that the main short video accounts for introducing content to Xi'an city are official and private. Official short video accounts are usually government accounts or mainstream media. The characteristics of these accounts are high accuracy of video content and high influence in society. While the private video accounts are owned by local people or organizations, and their characteristics lie in the fact that most of them have a profit purpose. In terms of video content release, they tend to focus on personal profits, mostly content that can attract traffic, and do not care about shaping the comprehensive city image.

After investigation, it was found that private accounts are more eye-catching due to their content, and their dissemination of information is mainly based on UGC. These accounts are more popular and have higher attention than official accounts. therefore, in such a situation where the main body of short video dissemination is chaotic, the video content does not have a promoting effect on the shaping of the city image. In addition, the current short video promotion in Xi'an mainly focuses on its cuisine, with less promotion of cultural aspects, and for the release of videos on cultural aspects, the attention is not high, which will lead to biased impressions of Xi'an by the public for promoting the its image, believing that Xi'an is just "delicious" rather than historic.

### **2.2 Incomplete Content and Low Originality of Short Videos**

The urban image of Xi'an is comprehensive, composed of various resources such as culture and history. In the dissemination of short videos, due to the length of the short video itself, introducing Xi'an in the short video may only present one aspect, making the public's understanding incomplete. In addition, because the main force of short videos promoted currently is personal accounts, and most of the bloggers are weak in creating perfect works. Moreover, for video creativity, some bloggers will imitate popular works, resulting in similar video types. Short video officials often launch activities such as check-in and topic challenges, which were originally intended to promote the creativity of video creators. However, these activities have created templates for others' imitation, resulting in lower originality of short videos and fewer high-quality creative works. When searching for Xi'an, people will find that most of the video content is similar, causing the public to have a one-sided impression of it.

## **3. Optimization Strategies for Shaping the Urban Image of Xi'an from the Perspective of Short Videos**

### **3.1 To Shape Content Themes through Historical Culture**

Xi'an is located in the inland hinterland of China. As the capital city of Shaanxi Province, it spans the two major water systems of the Yellow River and Yangtze River, and combines the characteristics of the northern, central, and southern regions of Shaanxi province. There are rich historical cultural heritages, such as agricultural culture and red culture. The display of Xi'an's urban image can comprehensively showcase the historical significance of Xi'an by showcasing historical materials such as Chang'an ancient music and the Big Wild Goose

Pagoda. By comparing the urbanization development process of modern Xi'an with it and creating a collision between historical culture and modernization, a unique urban image of Xi'an can be formed.

### 3.2 To Establish an “Online” Propagation Net

Short videos have the characteristics of long duration, precise content, and strong interactivity. When watching short videos, viewers can create the text of the short video image through actions such as barrages, comments, and transmission. These comments and barrages are also a way to shape the city image. Therefore, in shaping the image of Xi'an city, the characteristics of short videos can be utilized to hold flash promotion, with cultural promotion as the focus. The content of short videos should be positioned in cultural aspects, and the audience should be guided to discuss cultural aspects in the copy. Multiple short video accounts can also be combined to construct a cultural promotion short video matrix, focusing on promoting a certain cultural content in Xi'an, so that the audience can have a more comprehensive understanding of its culture, thereby achieving the goal of shaping the city image of Xi'an.

### 3.3 To Interpret the “Xi'an Story” through Short Videos

The success of shaping a city's image is a reflection of its comprehensive strength. When creating short videos, storytelling can be chosen as a way to interpret real-life events in Xi'an through reasonable editing, allowing the public to understand the connotation of the city through stories. It is also a method of shaping the city image in the era of short videos. By using the interpretation of the story plot, time and space are brought back to the content of the story, and details such as the environment and character traits are portrayed to enhance the audience's interest in Xi'an through laughter and sadness.

## 4. Conclusion

The arrival of the “Internet+” era has facilitated the shaping and promotion of the urban image. With the convenience of the short video platform, Zibo, Luoyang and other cities are becoming more and more popular, and the number of tourists is rapidly rising. Xi'an can also learn from the successful experience of these cities in image building, and combine itself local culture and characteristics to shape a comprehensive city image. By disseminating Xi'an stories, establishing a publicity net and other ways, to change the traditional impression of Xi'an in the minds of everyone, thus enhancing the competitiveness and popularity of Xi'an in the new era, and encouraging people to fall in love with Xi'an.

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