

# Analysis of the Causes and Development Suggestions of the Network Red City Circle: Taking Zibo, Harbin and Tianshui as Examples

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**Abstract:** ' Internet celebrity city ' refers to the fact that in the real and online world, cities are concerned and popular among netizens because of some interesting, novel or attractive characteristics, so that a number of cities are well known on the Internet, thus making the city brand concrete. The research group focused on the recent red-hot cities such as Zibo in Shandong, Harbin in Heilongjiang, and Tianshui in Gansu, and considered the phenomenon of these cities out of the circle. This paper will use the case study method to analyze the above three cities as an example, unlock the password of the network red city out of the circle, and deeply explore the reasons for its out of the circle, in order to learn from its successful experience and promote the network red to become long and red, and the flow to become stock.

**Keywords:** Internet Celebrity City; Zibo; Harbin; Tianshui; the Reason for the Circle

## 1. Introduction

Under the background of traffic economy, with the rapid development of Internet technology and the rapid rise of social media, the phenomenon of Internet celebrity city has gradually become prominent. These cities often rely on unique cultural symbols, charming attractions or novel events to quickly become popular on the network platform and attract the attention and heated discussion of countless netizens. However, although the aura of the Internet celebrity city is dazzling, it also faces the challenge of how to transform the short-term ' traffic ' into a long-term ' retention ' and realize the transformation from ' Internet celebrity ' to ' long red '. Although the " out of

the circle " of web celebrity cities is a social practice for urban development in the new era, it is a far-reaching issue for the sustainable development of cities in the future to make web celebrity cities longer and red. Based on this, this article will analyze the three urban cases of Zibo in Shandong, Harbin in Heilongjiang, and Tianshui in Gansu, and deeply explore the mechanism of the popularity of online celebrity cities and summarize the commonness of online celebrity cities, in order to explore the path of urban sustainable development.

## 2. The Case of Net Red City Circle

### 2.1 Zibo, Shandong

At the beginning of March 2023, ' college students go to Zibo by high-speed rail ' was directly searched, and the flow blessing and memetic dissemination of short video made Zibo barbecue get great attention [1]. After college students went to Zibo to bring the first round of heat, tens of millions of fan food bloggers such as ' B Tai ' and ' Special Ulla ' also went to Zibo to shoot barbecue videos, pushing Zibo barbecue to a higher heat. Zibo seizes the opportunity, uses the new media platform to cooperate in marketing, tells the story of Zibo, and displays the vivid barbecue experience in front of tourists. With the soul eating method of ' small string + small cake + small onion ', Zibo barbecue has bolted people 's stomach. In order to better shape the city card of ' Zibo barbecue ', Zibo has made tourists not only warm their stomachs but also warm their hearts through the way of political communication and going up and down. Local governments issue barbecue maps, add barbecue trains, and issue barbecue coupons;

the public security system should increase the number of duty personnel, strengthen traffic guidance, and increase the density of public security patrols; the market supervision department conducts special inspections on the barbecue shops to ensure that the stores meet the standards; the fire department should strengthen the investigation of fire hazards and improve the level of safety prevention; businesses operate in good faith, do not kill customers and deceive customers; the citizens are warm, polite and hospitable [2].

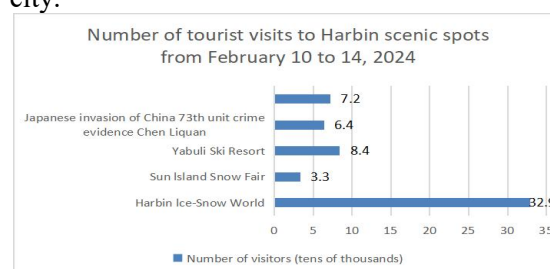
Through this up to the government, down to the public 's ' one-stop ' service, Zibo successfully played a ' pet powder city ' signboard. From the eight overall convenience market of honesty and affordability to the barbecue square built quickly, to the reasonable adjustment of the hotel and the opening of the " people-friendly " of the municipal government compound, Zibo has always won the hearts of the people with service and circled out in good faith. The process of Zibo 's popularity perfectly fits the life ideal described by Confucius and sages on this land more than 2,000 years ago: Mochun, spring clothes, five or six champions, six or seven children, bathing in Yi, dancing in Yu, singing and returning [3]. From the initial ' entering Zibo to roast ' to today 's ' coming Zibo to re-roast ', Zibo is taking a ' long red ' road of urban construction.

## 2.2 Heilongjiang Harbin

At the end of 2023, Harbin was once a popular tourist city in China due to the events of Harbin Ice and Snow World Refund Ticket Storm, the explosion of " Southern Small Potato " hot words and the brave invasion of " Xiaoshatangju " into Harbin. Its popularity continued to " Shuangdan " and the Spring Festival. This heat is praised by netizens as ' the wealth of the sky '.

In order to catch this ' heavenly wealth ', the Harbin municipal government has carefully planned and organized a series of high-quality ice and snow festivals, including the Harbin Ice and Snow World and the Ice Lamp Art Garden. These activities not only show Harbin 's unique ice and snow resources, but also make the ice and snow art show an unprecedented viewing experience by introducing modern scientific and technological elements and artistic

creativity. At the same time, the major news media such as Xinhuanet, The Paper and so on have made positive reports on Harbin 's ice and snow tourism, so that Harbin 's characteristic culture and scenic spots have been widely disseminated, further improving Harbin 's popularity and making it a " top stream " in the field of cultural tourism. In addition, the active participation and enthusiastic service of Harbin citizens also provided strong support for the formation of the ' Harbin fever ' phenomenon. Figure 1 shows the number of visitors to Harbin attractions from February 10 to 14, 2024. As can be seen from Figure 1, Harbin received 6.298 million tourists during the Spring Festival in 2024, an increase of 82.9 % year-on-year. Among them, the ice and snow world attracted 329,000 people, an increase of 115%; yabuli ski resort attracted 84,000 people, an increase of 177.9 %. These data undoubtedly prove the ' Harbin fever ', and also let us see the great potential and infinite charm of Harbin as a new Internet celebrity city.



**Figure 1. Number of Visitors to Harbin Attractions from 10 to 14 February 2024**  
Data Source: Heilongjiang Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism

## 2.3 Tianshui, Gansu

The human fireworks, the most caressing ordinary people. Following the ' Zibo barbecue ' in Zibo, Shandong Province and the ' ice and snow wonders ' in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, a bowl of ordinary spicy blanching has made Tianshui, Gansu Province, located in the northwest of China, a ' hot and hot blanching ' city. According to the statistics of Qunar platform, the search volume of Tianshui has gradually increased since February 26, and the search growth rate has increased by 2000 % year-on-year. Recalling the out-of-circle context of ' Tianshui spicy hot ', its fire was benefited from a video ' Suggesting the Popularization of Gansu spicy hot ' released by a netizen named ' A Cup of Liang Baikai ' on

the short video platform on February 13 this year. As of March 18, the video had 1.346 million likes and 1.901 million forwards. Although this video is only seven seconds, but the number of likes and retweets are staggering more than a million. Not only the southern weekend, the surging news and other domestic top streaming media and many Internet celebrities competed to report, ' Gansu Tianshui Ma spicy hot ' video so the content increased rapidly, the heat is getting higher and higher, many times on the Tik Tok, fast hand and other short video platform hot list [4]; and various culinary talents have also traveled to the evaluation, not far away to go to the ' hot blanching ' on the tip of the tongue.

At the same time, the cultural and tourism department of Gansu Province quickly caught this development opportunity, made full preparations for this " sky-splashing wealth, " effectively polished the " love Tianshui " business card, and launched a number of " pet powder " and heart-warming moves. For example, opening a special line for ' spicy hot ', giving free tickets to scenic spots, and holding a ' spicy hot ' food festival. In addition, in order to welcome the tourists, the Office of the Guiding Committee for the Construction of Spiritual Civilization in Tianshui City also put forward an initiative to actively encourage the general public and businesses to show a warm and hospitable, sincere and simple image of Tianshui. Tianshui citizens and businesses also spontaneously cooperate with relevant departments to do a good job in tourist services, such as free private cars to pick up tourists, free WiFi provided by businesses, and gifts of fruits and beverages from enterprises.

### 3. The Reasons for the Net Red City out of the Circle

With the popularity of Zibo barbecue, Harbin ice and snow, Tianshui spicy hot and other cultural tourism IP, it is not difficult to find that there are certain commonalities in the circle of Internet celebrity cities. By combing the context of the network red city, the following three common reasons for the circle can be summarized.

First, it has a profound historical background and unique resource endowment. The profound historical background makes the city itself attractive, and the unique resource endowment makes the city 's charm ' higher '. Such as Zibo

's barbecue, Harbin 's ice and snow, Tianshui 's spicy hot and so on are the refinement of urban characteristics. Although the paths of each city becoming ' web celebrity ' and ' out of the circle ' are different, in the final analysis, they are inseparable from the in-depth exploration and integration of local cultural history and characteristic resources [5]. These web celebrity cities are precisely by excavating local characteristics, emphasizing and amplifying cultural symbols that represent the characteristics of the city, building a beautiful city image in people 's hearts, and promoting the city to stand out.

The second is to take advantage of the wind of the Internet. With the rapid development of the Internet, the dissemination and sharing of information has become more convenient. In particular, social media platforms, such as Douyin, Weibo, Xiaohongshu, etc., have become an important channel for people to obtain information and express their views and are deeply loved and respected by people. Internet celebrity city is to seize the opportunity of the Internet, through a variety of communication channels, in order to obtain unprecedented exposure opportunities and network heat. Whether Zibo or Harbin or Tianshui, the ' starting point ' of becoming a web celebrity city is derived from the fermentation of a network public opinion event. At the same time, with the help of the fission spread of information and the recommendation and sharing of some online celebrities, opinion leaders and food bloggers, the probability of online celebrity cities out of the circle has greatly increased.

The third is to obtain strong support from the local government. Internet celebrity city is hot online, but it comes from offline. The opportunity to promote the city 's popularity is the response and measures of the local government in the face of emergencies [6]. It is not only a test of urban management and service, but also a test of the comprehensive management efficiency of urban cultural tourism industry. Throughout these web celebrity cities, their exit is inseparable from the strong support of the local government and the careful cultivation of the cultural and tourism departments. As Professor Hu Chuandong said: ' The city 's most attractive tipping point type can 't wait, can 't learn, can 't rub. It must be based on careful combing and

careful planning of the core elements of urban geography and humanities, refined according to local conditions, and cultivated with patience.'

#### **4. Suggestions on the Realization of Flow Change Stock in the City of Network Red Circle**

Zibo barbecue, Harbin ice and snow feast, Tianshui spicy hot as a local specialty food and tourism business card, their popularity often stems from online word-of-mouth, social media communication or promotion of activities in specific seasons. In the era of information explosion, there is never a lack of explosive points and flows. If urban tourism wants to turn flows into stocks, it is necessary to guide diversified needs and adhere to the thinking of sustainable development [7]. The following are some suggestions for each city to achieve 'stock':

##### **4.1 Zibo Barbecue**

One is to improve quality and service. In addition to ensuring fresh ingredients and unique taste, Zibo barbecue can introduce more diversified ingredients to meet the taste needs of different tourists. At the same time, it provides customized services, such as barbecue packages and private customized barbecue experiences, so that tourists can enjoy personalized services while tasting delicious food. In addition, strengthen staff training, improve service attitude and professional skills, so that every tourist can feel the intimate and professional services.

The second is to build brand culture. In addition to telling the historical story and inheriting culture of Zibo barbecue, some cultural activities related to barbecue can be carried out, such as barbecue cultural exhibition and barbecue skill competition, so that tourists can deeply understand the cultural heritage of Zibo barbecue while tasting delicious food. At the same time, design a unique brand image and slogan, strengthen brand communication and promotion, and enhance brand awareness and reputation.

Third, sustainable development and social responsibility. Focus on environmental protection, such as the use of degradable tableware, the promotion of energy saving and emission reduction of ice and snow maintenance technology, to show the brand's

social responsibility; actively participate in public welfare activities, such as supporting local small businesses, holding food charity auctions, and enhancing the positive image of the brand.

##### **4.2 Harbin Ice and Snow Feast School Level**

One is to innovate ice and snow tourism products. In addition to traditional ice and snow sculptures, ice lamps and other landscapes, more innovative and interactive ice and snow tourism activities can be developed in combination with VR technology. For example, virtual skiing, ice sculpture interactive games, the introduction of ice and snow theme parks and other activities, so that visitors can experience the fun and stimulation of ice and snow. At the same time, combined with the local cultural characteristics, create ice and snow tourism cultural and creative products with local characteristics, and enhance the uniqueness and attractiveness of the products.

Second, improve the quality of tourism services. Provide a full range of service guarantees in terms of accommodation, transportation, and tour guides, so that visitors can enjoy a pleasant travel experience in Harbin's ice and snow feast. Strengthen the management and training of hotels and homestays, improve the accommodation environment and service quality; optimize the transportation network and provide convenient transportation services; strengthen tour guide training and management, improve the quality of tour guide service. At the same time, a perfect tourist complaint handling mechanism should be established to solve the problems and difficulties encountered by tourists in the process of tourism in a timely manner.

Third, pay attention to sustainable development and balance seasonal issues. Introduce seasonal or thematic activities, such as balanced development in non-snow seasons. This requires the city to consider the long-term in the early stage of planning and avoid the phenomenon of 'flash in the pan'.

##### **4.3 Tianshui Spicy Hot**

One is standardized operation. While formulating strict production standards and service processes, we will strengthen staff training and management, so that each employee can master production skills and

service specifications. In addition, a quality monitoring system can be established to regularly inspect and evaluate each store to stabilize product quality and service level.

The second is to develop new flavors. On the basis of maintaining the traditional taste, new flavors and new dishes are constantly developed. New ingredients and seasonings can be introduced, different cooking techniques and collocation methods can be tried, and more distinctive spicy hot tastes can be developed. At the same time, we can pay attention to changes in consumer tastes and changes in demand, and adjust product strategies and market positioning in a timely manner. In addition, it can cooperate with other catering brands or food companies to jointly develop new products and flavors to enhance the diversity and attractiveness of products.

The third is to strengthen takeaway services. Make full use of the opportunities of the takeaway market and strengthen the promotion and operation of takeaway services. You can cooperate with major takeaway platforms to include spicy hot products into the recommendation and promotion activities of the takeaway platform; at the same time, it provides fast and accurate delivery services, and the quality and taste of takeaway products are not affected. In addition, through the data analysis function of the takeaway platform, we can understand consumers' purchasing habits and taste preferences, and provide strong support for product development and marketing strategy formulation.

## **5. The Experience Enlightenment of Internet Celebrity City Out of the Circle**

Zibo barbecue, Harbin ice and snow feast, Tianshui spicy hot these three local characteristics of the project is popular, not only for their respective cities have brought significant popularity and economic benefits, but also for other cities to provide a valuable reference experience, especially in how to tap and use of local characteristics and culture, to create a phenomenon-level tourism brand. Here are some key lessons:

### **5.1 Dig Deep Cultural Connotation, to Create A Unique Brand**

Each city has its unique historical accumulation, cultural traditions and regional

characteristics. In order to successfully build a tourism brand, we must first conduct in-depth research and excavation of our own cultural heritage [8]. This is not only a review of historical events, but also a comprehensive exploration of local customs, folk art, and special cuisine. A city may be different because of its unique architectural style, traditional handicrafts or local festivals. Integrating these unique cultural elements into tourism products can provide tourists with an immersive experience, so that they can truly feel the charm of the city.

### **5.2 Make Good Use of Internet Marketing, Expand Visibility**

'Wine aroma is also afraid of deep alley'. Even if a city is rich in tourism resources, it is difficult to attract a large number of tourists if it lacks effective publicity. Therefore, cities need to make full use of various publicity channels, such as social media, short video platforms, tourism websites and other new media tools to improve their popularity [9]. At the same time, it can also attract more media attention and tourists' participation by holding various cultural festivals, tourism promotion activities, etc.

### **5.3 Improve Service Quality and Optimize Tourism Experience**

The experience of tourists is the key to evaluate a tourism brand. The city needs to provide comfortable, convenient and thoughtful services from the perspective of tourists. The support and guidance of the government, coupled with the active participation of the people, is the key to promoting the popularity of local characteristic projects [10]. The government can establish a sound tourism consultation and complaint handling mechanism, and private enterprises are responsible for innovation and implementation. The two work together to enable tourists to get timely help and solutions when they encounter problems. At the same time, it can also ensure that they can provide professional guidance and enthusiastic service for tourists by training and improving the quality of practitioners.

## **6. Conclusion**

Under the background of the digital era, the phenomenon of web celebrity cities has

become increasingly prominent. These cities have quickly become popular with their unique cultural charm, effective network communication and strong support from the government. By analyzing the successful cases of Zibo, Harbin, Tianshui and other cities, we can know that the popularity of Internet celebrity cities is not accidental, but driven by a series of forces behind them. These cities have successfully attracted a large number of tourists and followers by tapping cultural characteristics, relying on effective network communication means, and the joint efforts of multiple departments, and have achieved a gorgeous turn from obscurity to internet celebrity cities.

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