

Design Strategies for International Web Novel Platforms: A Case Study of Fizzo's Market Adaptation

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Abstract: This paper discusses the strategies adopted by online novel platforms in the international market of online novels, especially Fizzo's product design strategies and methods for overseas markets. By analysing visual design elements, user interface considerations, and brand identity development for different factors, the study investigates how digital reading platforms adapt their services to meet the aesthetic preferences and usage habits of international audiences. The results show that excellent international adaptation needs to pay attention to regional aesthetic standards, user behavior patterns and content presentation styles. A case study of Fizzo shows that platforms targeting Western markets benefit from minimalist design principles, an emphasis on high-quality visual elements, and intuitive interactions that are familiar to local users. Through this research, it helps to understand the cross-cultural considerations necessary for the global expansion of digital content platforms, and provides advice and value for companies seeking to optimize their design strategies for an international audience in the webnovel industry in the future.

Keywords: Web Novel Platforms; International Market Adaptation; User Experience Design; Interaction Design; Digital Entertainment

1. Introduction

In today's environment, the global expansion of digital entertainment platforms poses challenges for content providers seeking to establish a presence in international markets. As a digital native literary model, online novels have experienced explosive growth in recent years, and some platforms have reached international audiences not only for the domestic market [1]. This expansion in the international market

requires careful consideration of cross-cultural factors in product design and user experience development. In the online novel industry, especially for the online novel market in East Asia, unique business models and user engagement design strategies have been developed, which are different from the traditional publishing methods in Western markets [2]. It's important to know that as these platforms expand internationally, they will have to deal with cultural differences in terms of reading habits, aesthetic preferences, and content consumption patterns [3]. The value of the global digital reading market is about to continue to expand [4].

In the case of seeking international expansion, Fizzo represents a guiding case for the adaptation of online novel platforms for overseas markets to conduct a systematic study. As documented in the 2020 Product Design Plan, Fizzo's international approach to market entry included user demographics, product competitive analysis, and logo development and design tailored specifically to Western audiences [5]. This paper examines the design strategies and adaptation mechanisms adopted by Fizzo in its international expansion with a detailed analysis and research, with a particular focus on the development of brand identity with visual design elements and cross-cultural appeal, user interface design based on different usage styles and expectations, content presentation strategies that address the differences in the Chinese of literary consumption, and understanding the competitive positioning of established platforms in the target market [6,7].

By analyzing these aspects of Fizzo's internationalization strategy, this study provides a valuable reference to the growing literature on the globalization of digital content and provides valuable insights for companies seeking to expand their digital platforms across cultural boundaries. These findings have implications for

digital publishing platforms and broader digital entertainment services to address similar international expansion challenges [8]. Previous research has shown that the internationalization of good digital platforms requires more than just the translation of content and interface elements [9]. Instead, a holistic localization approach that considers the cultural dimension of the user experience is essential for market acceptance [10]. In the specific context of today's web novels, reader engagement is heavily influenced by the aesthetic characteristics of the platform and the attraction of community characteristics and content discovery mechanisms, all of which may require significant adjustments for different cultural contexts [11,12].

International web novel platforms must be designed to take into account the differences that exist in different markets. Studies have shown that there may be significant differences in the aesthetic preferences of Eastern and Western audiences, especially in visual design elements such as color schemes, typography, and layout [13]. Similarly, differences in interaction patterns and navigation expectations may vary based on a user's previous experience with a digital platform in their home market [14]. Content organization and discovery mechanisms also need to be adapted and adapted, as reading habits and genre preferences show significant cross-cultural differences [15,16].

Among them, the development of brand identity poses certain challenges to the international expansion of online novel platforms. Effective brand communication must resonate with local cultural values while remaining consistent with the platform's core identity [17]. This balance between adaptation and standardization has been identified as having a significant impact on the expansion of international digital services [18]. The competitive landscape for digital reading platforms varies significantly across markets, with different established players and varying levels of market maturity requiring tailored positioning strategies [19,20].

While existing literature has examined cross-cultural user experience design broadly [21,22], and some studies have focused on the internationalization of digital reading platforms in general [23], there remains limited research specifically addressing the design strategies employed by East Asian web novel platforms entering Western markets. This paper addresses this gap through a detailed examination of

Fizzo's approach, offering both theoretical insights and practical applications for industry practitioners [24]. Through investigating key design adaptations necessary for web novel platforms expanding from East Asian to Western markets, user demographic influences on product design decisions in cross-cultural contexts, and effective branding and visual identity strategies, this paper contributes to both academic understanding of cross-cultural digital product design and provides practical guidance for companies in the rapidly evolving global web novel industry [25].

2. Research Methods

This study takes web novel platforms in international markets as research objects and adopts a mixed research method combining literature research, case analysis, expert interviews, and fuzzy analytic hierarchy process. The research ethics review materials for this study were submitted to the University Ethics Committee for review on January 15, 2024. The recruitment period started on February 5, 2024 and ended on March 10, 2024. During this execution period, the committee approved the specific research implementation plan and the procedures and communication documents for recruiting research subjects.

2.1 Literature Research

By systematically searching Chinese and foreign literature databases, including CNKI, Wanfang, Vip, Web of Science, Scopus, etc., this study sorts out the relevant theoretical achievements in the fields of web novel industry development, cross-cultural design, and user experience evaluation, solidifying the theoretical foundation of the research. At the same time, secondary data such as relevant policy documents, industry reports, and news reports on the development of web novel platforms in international markets were collected to comprehensively grasp the current development status of digital reading platforms across different regions.

2.2 Case Analysis

According to the research purpose, representative web novel platforms including Fizzo, Wattpad, and Dreame were selected as cases for in-depth analysis. Through interface analysis, participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and other methods, first-hand data of the cases were collected to

understand the characteristics of the web novel service industry, business models, and operational mechanisms across markets, summarize experiences and lessons, identify problems and deficiencies, and provide practical basis for constructing an optimization framework for web novel platform design in international contexts.

2.3 Questionnaire Survey

In order to understand the design considerations and optimization strategies for international web novel platforms, this study conducted in-depth interviews with professionals in the field. After expert review and pilot testing of the initial interview guide, 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with design professionals, including three former designers from Fizzo, four UX specialists with expertise in cross-cultural design, three content strategists, and two digital publishing executives. The demographic characteristics of the interviewed experts are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Interviewed Experts

Characteristic	Category	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	7	58.3%
	Female	5	41.7%
Experience	3-5 years	2	16.7%
	6-10 years	7	58.3%
	Over years	3	25.0%
Background	Design	5	41.7%
	Product Management	3	25.0%
	Content Strategy	2	16.7%
	Executive	2	16.7%

The interview data were analyzed using NVivo 12.0 software for thematic analysis; transcripts were coded systematically to identify recurring patterns and insights relevant to international web novel platform design.

2.4 Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process

In order to clarify the importance of various elements in web novel platform design for international markets, this study adopts the Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (FAHP) for quantitative evaluation. Based on literature review, case analysis, expert interviews, etc., a recursive hierarchical structure model including the objective layer, criteria layer, and scheme layer is constructed (as shown in Table 2).

After constructing the hierarchical structure model for evaluating web novel platform design, an expert survey questionnaire was designed to collect judgments from relevant experts on the pairwise comparisons of elements at each level. A 5-point Likert scale was used to allow experts to score the importance of the evaluation indicators based on their own knowledge and experience.

The triangular fuzzy number method was used to analyze the scores from each expert, calculate the fuzzy consistency ratio of the judgment matrices, and ultimately obtain the weights of each indicator. The triangular fuzzy number can be represented as (l, m, u) , where l , m , and u represent the minimum, mean, and maximum values of the expert scores, respectively. Using interval arithmetic operations, the fuzzy judgment matrices of pairwise comparisons for each indicator were obtained.

Chang's extent analysis method was adopted to calculate the synthetic extent values of each element in the judgment matrices, which were then normalized to obtain the fuzzy weight vector of each indicator relative to the objective layer. To ensure the reliability of the results, the fuzzy consistency was tested. The FAHP analysis process was implemented using MATLAB 2018a software. This study adopts a mixed research paradigm combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, aiming to comprehensively and systematically evaluate the design strategies for novel web platforms in international markets, identify key factors for successful adaptation, and provide a scientific basis for optimizing digital reading experiences across cultural boundaries.

Table 2. FAHP Hierarchical Structure for Web Novel Platform Design Evaluation

Criteria Layer	Indicator Layer
A Visual Design	A1. Color scheme and typography
	A2. Layout and information hierarchy
	A3. Cover design standards
	A4. Brand identity elements
	A5. Visual storytelling components
B User Interface	B1. Navigation patterns
	B2. Reading experience optimization

	B3. Content discovery mechanisms
	B4. Social interaction features
	B5. Customization options
C Content Strategy	C1. Genre categorization
	C2. Cultural adaptation of content
	C3. Translation quality
	C4. Content tagging systems
	C5. Monetization integration
D Market Adaptation	D1. Target demographic alignment
	D2. Competitor differentiation
	D3. Local platform integration
	D4. Cultural sensitivity measures
	D5. Regional feature customization

3. Results

Based on the FAHP method, this study constructs a web novel platform design evaluation index system (Table 3) consisting of 4 criteria layers, including visual design (A), user interface (B), content strategy (C), and market adaptation (D), and 20 indicator layers. From the overall ranking results of the layers, it can be seen that the weights of visual design (A) and user interface (B) are similar, at 0.2734 and 0.2681 respectively, higher than the 0.2328 of content strategy (C) and 0.2257 of market adaptation (D), indicating that in web novel platform design for international markets, the importance of visual and interface elements is slightly higher than content and market strategies.

In the visual design criteria layer, the weight of cover design standards (A3) is the highest, at 0.23, followed by brand identity elements (A4) and visual storytelling components (A5), both with weights of 0.21, then color scheme and typography (A1) and layout and information hierarchy (A2), with weights of 0.18 and 0.17 respectively. This indicates that book cover

design plays a critical role in attracting international users to web novels, serving as the primary visual touchpoint for audience engagement.

In the user interface criteria layer, the weight of reading experience optimization (B2) is the highest, at 0.24, followed by content discovery mechanisms (B3) at 0.22, navigation patterns (B1) at 0.20, and customization options (B5) and social interaction features (B4) at 0.18 and 0.16 respectively. This result highlights the primacy of the core reading experience in successful web novel platforms, regardless of cultural context.

In the content strategy criteria layer, cultural adaptation of content (C2) received the highest weight at 0.25, followed by genre categorization (C1) at 0.22, translation quality (C3) at 0.21, and content tagging systems (C4) and monetization integration (C5) at 0.17 and 0.15 respectively. This finding underscores the importance of adapting content presentation and categorization to align with cultural expectations in international markets.

In the market adaptation criteria layer, target demographic alignment (D1) holds the highest weight at 0.26, followed by cultural sensitivity measures (D4) at 0.23, competitor differentiation (D2) at 0.19, regional feature customization (D5) at 0.17, and local platform integration (D3) at 0.15. These weights reflect the critical importance of understanding and aligning with specific user demographics when adapting web novel platforms for international markets.

From the overall ranking of the weights of the indicator layer, the global weight of reading experience optimization (B2) is the highest, at 0.0643, followed by cover design standards (A3) at 0.0629, target demographic alignment (D1) at 0.0587, cultural adaptation of content (C2) at 0.0582, and content discovery mechanisms (B3) at 0.0590. These five indicators are the key points for optimizing web novel platform design for international markets.

Table 3. FAHP Web Novel Platform Design Evaluation Framework Results

Node	Global Weight	Local Weight	Parent
A Visual Design	0.2734	0.2734	Web Novel Platform Design
B User Interface	0.2681	0.2681	Web Novel Platform Design
C Content Strategy	0.2328	0.2328	Web Novel Platform Design
D Market Adaptation	0.2257	0.2257	Web Novel Platform Design
A1. Color scheme and typography	0.0492	0.18	A Visual Design
A2. Layout and information hierarchy	0.0465	0.17	A Visual Design
A3. Cover design standards	0.0629	0.23	A Visual Design
A4. Brand identity elements	0.0574	0.21	A Visual Design

A5. Visual storytelling components	0.0574	0.21	A Visual Design
B1. Navigation patterns	0.0536	0.20	B User Interface
B2. Reading experience optimization	0.0643	0.24	B User Interface
B3. Content discovery mechanisms	0.0590	0.22	B User Interface
B4. Social interaction features	0.0429	0.16	B User Interface
B5. Customization options	0.0483	0.18	B User Interface
C1. Genre categorization	0.0512	0.22	C Content Strategy
C2. Cultural adaptation of content	0.0582	0.25	C Content Strategy
C3. Translation quality	0.0489	0.21	C Content Strategy
C4. Content tagging systems	0.0396	0.17	C Content Strategy
C5. Monetization integration	0.0349	0.15	C Content Strategy
D1. Target demographic alignment	0.0587	0.26	D Market Adaptation
D2. Competitor differentiation	0.0429	0.19	D Market Adaptation
D3. Local platform integration	0.0339	0.15	D Market Adaptation
D4. Cultural sensitivity measures	0.0519	0.23	D Market Adaptation
D5. Regional feature customization	0.0383	0.17	D Market Adaptation

Case studies comparing Fizzo (Figure 1), Wattpad, and Dreame reveal different approaches and strategies for adapting to international markets. Fizzo's design strategy addresses complex visual design, emphasizing the inclusion of design standards that meet Western aesthetic expectations. The genre classification system they implement is closely related to Western publishing practices, which is more consistent with the typical Asian web novel category. Fizzo has also prioritized reading experience optimization, including features such as customizable typography, background colors, and reading mode options to meet the higher demands of Western users for a refined user interface.

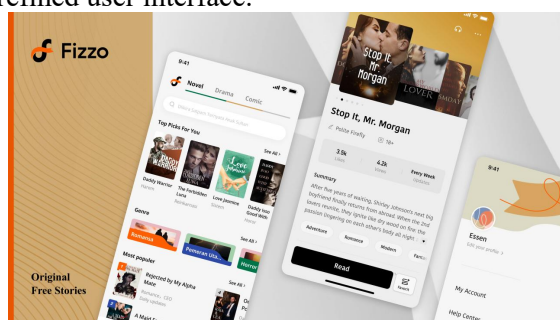


Figure 1. Fizzo International Interface Design Display

Wattpad has demonstrated its prowess in social interaction and community building, with their interface design prioritizing features such as comments, likes, and sharing features that are integrated directly into the reading experience. Their approach focused more on building an interactive community around content rather than solely optimizing the reading experience. Dreame showed particular effectiveness in content discovery mechanisms, implementing

sophisticated recommendation algorithms and personalized content surfacing that effectively bridged cultural differences in content preferences.

Based on the questionnaire survey results, web novel readers in international markets place higher importance on visual design and user interface compared to content strategy and market adaptation aspects. They also have stronger demands for reading experience optimization, cultural adaptation of content, and sophisticated cover design standards. These findings align significantly with the ranking of indicator weights derived from the FAHP analysis, reflecting the convergence in perceived importance of various design elements among different stakeholders.

The study also conducted comparative analysis of actual implementation quality of these design elements across the three platforms. Fizzo received higher evaluation scores in visual design aspects, particularly for cover design standards and visual storytelling components. Wattpad scored highest in social interaction features and community engagement mechanisms, while Dreame performed well in content discovery mechanisms and genre categorization. These differential strengths suggest complementary approaches to international market adaptation that could be selectively implemented based on target audience priorities.

The experts interviewed for this study identified several key factors that make web novel platforms suitable for international markets. This includes the large differences between Eastern and Western audiences in terms of genre

expectations and reading preferences, the need for extensive redesign of visual elements to meet the aesthetic differences of different cultures, and the need to balance the standardization of core functions with the localization of content presentation. Experts emphasize that a successful international adaptation requires more than superficial translation or visual redesign, but a fundamental rethinking of how stories are categorized, presented, and discovered within the platform.

Moving forward, web novel platform optimization for international markets should focus on the five highest-weighted indicators identified in this study: reading experience optimization, cover design standards, target demographic alignment, cultural adaptation of content, and content discovery mechanisms. Platforms should leverage comprehensive user research to understand specific target demographic expectations in each market, develop culturally appropriate visual design systems, ensure sophisticated adaptation of content categorization and presentation, and prioritize the core reading experience above secondary features. By addressing these key elements with culturally informed approaches, web novel platforms can more effectively expand their global footprint and user engagement.

4. Discussion

Based on the FAHP method, this study constructs a multi-dimensional web novel platform design evaluation framework and conducts an empirical analysis of international adaptation strategies, with Fizzo as a primary case study. The research results provide new perspectives for web novel platform optimization in international markets.

The weights of the components of the web novel platform design framework show significant heterogeneity (Figure 2). While previous research on digital content platforms has emphasized content as the primary driver of user engagement, this study found that visual design and user interface elements carried higher importance weights than content strategy components. This difference may reflect the unique characteristics of web novel consumption in international contexts, where visual cues and interface quality serve as critical trust signals and differentiators in unfamiliar markets.



Figure 2. Fizzo Brand Identity Design and Application

The key influencing factors of web novel platform adaptation differ markedly from those of domestic platforms. Reading experience optimization, cover design standards, target demographic alignment, cultural adaptation of content, and content discovery mechanisms carried the highest weights, indicating that international adaptation requires substantive reconsideration of both presentation and functionality. However, some industry practices continue to prioritize rapid internationalization through minimal adaptation, which may limit market acceptance.

Regional differences in user expectations and preferences represent significant challenges for web novel platforms expanding internationally. The case analysis revealed that Fizzo adopted distinctly different design approaches for Western markets compared to its domestic operations, reflecting substantial differences in user expectations between regions. Future research should expand the geographic scope of analysis to include emerging markets, which may present different adaptation challenges.

The multi-dimensional nature of successful platform adaptation suggests the need for more sophisticated internationalization frameworks. While this study identified key components through FAHP analysis, the interrelationships between these components deserve further investigation. For example, the relationship between visual design elements and content discovery mechanisms may be synergistic, with culturally appropriate visual cues enhancing the effectiveness of recommendation algorithms in new markets.

This study also has certain limitations. The evaluation framework focuses primarily on design and user experience elements, with less emphasis on technical infrastructure and business model components. The empirical analysis relies significantly on expert evaluation and comparative case studies, which could be

complemented by more extensive quantitative analysis of user behavior data across markets. Additionally, the rapidly evolving nature of the web novel industry means that user expectations continue to shift, potentially affecting the stability of the identified importance over time. Future research directions include expanding the analysis to additional markets and platform types, investigating the temporal dimension of adaptation strategies as markets mature, and exploring the relationship between specific design choices and key performance indicators such as user acquisition and retention in international contexts.

5. Conclusion

This study constructs a multi-dimensional evaluation framework for web novel platform design based on the Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (FAHP) and conducts an empirical test using Fizzo as a primary case study. The study finds that the importance of key elements in web novel platform design show differentiated characteristics. The importance of visual design and user interface is higher than that of content strategy and market adaptation, indicating that improving aesthetic quality and optimizing user experience are the current focus of web novel platform internationalization.

Indicators such as reading experience optimization, cover design standards, target demographic alignment, cultural adaptation of content, and content discovery mechanisms have the highest weights, reflecting the development direction of web novel platforms' international expansion. The integration of culturally appropriate visual systems with adapted content organization appears critical for market acceptance, but the risks of over-standardization should be carefully managed.

Fizzo has demonstrated first-mover advantages in design system development and visual standards for international markets, while competitors show strengths in different aspects of the user experience. The construction of sophisticated platforms adapted for cross-cultural contexts provides important strategic opportunities for web novel services. The FAHP method can effectively address the complexity and uncertainty issues in web novel platform evaluation, but still needs to further expand the evaluation dimensions and refine the indicator hierarchy to enhance the robustness and practical relevance of the conclusions.

Web novel platform optimization for international markets is a systematic project that requires overall planning and advancement from multiple dimensions such as visual design innovation, interface optimization, content adaptation, and user-centered development. Success depends on constructing a collaborative approach with participation from multiple disciplines including design, content strategy, market research, and technical development. The theoretical contribution of this study lies in the pioneering introduction of FAHP into the field of web novel platform design, enriching theoretical perspectives and analytical tools for digital reading service evaluation in international contexts. The empirical conclusions provide decision-making references for web novel platform optimization in global markets and have practical guiding significance. Future research directions include further expanding the sources of web novel platform evaluation indicators, strengthening cross-regional comparative analysis to extract general principles of successful adaptation, and accelerating the development of evaluation methodologies to support the increasingly diverse global digital reading ecosystem.

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