

# Breaking Through with Sports "Event +" to Activate New Drivers for Liaoning's Revitalization

Qingni Wu<sup>1</sup>, Donghui Dai<sup>1</sup>, Jinnan Sun<sup>2,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sports Department, Shenyang Jianzhu University, Liaoning, China

<sup>2</sup>Beijing Shangdi Experimental School, Beijing, China

\*Corresponding Author

**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of high-quality development of China's sports industry and the comprehensive revitalization of Northeast China's old industrial bases, the sports "event +" economy has become a key engine driving regional consumption, industrial upgrading and urban brand improvement. Based on literature review, field investigation and logical analysis, this study systematically examines the development status, advantages, constraints and paths of the sports "event +" economy in Liaoning. The results show that Liaoning has distinctive strengths in industrial culture, ice and snow resources, venue facilities, public sports enthusiasm and manufacturing foundation, and sports events have already produced noticeable consumption-driven effects. However, problems such as insufficient recognition of characteristic event IP, low-level industrial integration, weak cross-departmental coordination, inadequate public participation and shortage of professional talents remain prominent. Accordingly, five paths are proposed: building characteristic Liaoning-style event IP, innovating diversified consumption scenarios, deepening industrial integration, strengthening communication and promotion, and improving support. This study aims to provide theoretical references and practical implications for promoting the high-quality development of the event economy and supporting Liaoning's comprehensive revitalization.

**Keywords:** Sports Event +; Liaoning Revitalization; Event Economy; Industrial Integration; Event IP

## 1. Introduction

At present, China's sports industry is entering a new stage of high-quality development. As an

important link connecting sports with culture, tourism, manufacturing, technology and consumption, the event economy has become an important starting point for stimulating domestic demand, promoting urban development and supporting regional revitalization. The state has issued policies including the 14th Five-Year Plan for Sports Development, which clearly support the integrated development of "event +" and encourage local areas to build characteristic event brands. Amid the restructuring of the national regional economic landscape and the in-depth implementation of the Northeast revitalization strategy, the sports industry has increasingly become an important sector for fostering new-quality productive forces, optimizing economic structure and enhancing urban influence due to its low carbon, strong driving effect and wide social benefits. As a core province of the old industrial base in Northeast China, Liaoning is in a critical period of striving for new breakthroughs in comprehensive revitalization. It enjoys unique conditions for developing the event economy relying on its industrial heritage, ice and snow resources, sports tradition and industrial foundation. In recent years, the number of sports events in Liaoning has increased continuously, and the consumption-driven effect has become increasingly prominent. However, obvious shortcomings still exist in terms of IP building, chain extension, supporting services and public participation. How to transform resource advantages into development advantages and turn event traffic into economic growth has become a practical issue for Liaoning to promote the high-quality development of the sports industry and boost regional revitalization. On this basis, this study systematically analyzes the development of Liaoning's sports "event +" economy and puts forward feasible development paths, so as to provide theoretical support and practical references for activating new drivers of

revitalization through the event economy.

## 2. Development Foundation and Advantages of Liaoning's Sports "Event +" Economy

Liaoning boasts a solid foundation and comparative advantages in developing the sports "event +" economy, which are mainly reflected in four aspects: resource endowment, market conditions, industrial support and environment [1].

In terms of culture and resources, Liaoning has a profound industrial culture. Industrial sites such as Shenyang Tiexi Industrial Zone, Anshan Iron and Steel Group and Dalian Shipbuilding Industry carry urban memory and embody the industrial spirit of "iron will and striving for excellence", which can be deeply integrated with sports events to form distinctive industrial sports IP. The province is rich in ice and snow resources widely distributed across all cities. High-quality venues including Shenyang Qipanshan, Dalian Lüshun and Benxi Guanmenshan provide ideal conditions for winter events. In 2024, more than 110 ice and snow events were held, receiving 1.634 million tourists, indicating that the ice and snow economy has begun to take shape. Rich intangible cultural heritage such as Manchu paper-cutting, Liao porcelain, Manchu yangko dance and Haicheng stilts inject strong regional characteristics into events, improving cultural connotation and attractiveness [2].

In terms of venues and market, central cities including Shenyang and Dalian have complete sports facilities. Shenyang Olympic Sports Center is capable of hosting international high-level events. Liaoning has a profound public foundation in basketball and football. The Liaoning Men's Basketball Team has won numerous championships and has a large and stable fan base, which significantly drives catering, accommodation and retail consumption on home game days. In 2024, a total of 6,452 sports events were held across the province, with nearly 9.4 million participants and spectators, driving comprehensive consumption of more than 5.3 billion yuan. The sports consumption market is becoming increasingly mature, and sports have become an important engine driving urban consumption and economic growth [3].

In terms of industry, Liaoning has a solid foundation in equipment manufacturing, general aviation and swimsuit industries. The annual output of swimsuits in Huludao exceeds 120

million pieces, accounting for more than 40% of the national market share, providing strong support for "event + manufacturing". The provincial government has issued policies such as subsidies for events and plans for ice and snow economy, providing financial support of 300,000 to 3 million yuan for various events, with additional rewards for first-time events. The approval process has been streamlined, and dividends continue to be released. The government's active platform construction and optimized services have created a favorable environment for the high-quality development of the event economy.

## 3. Constraints on the Development of Liaoning's Sports "Event +" Economy

Despite the sound momentum of development, Liaoning's event economy still faces five prominent bottlenecks against the requirements of high-quality development.

First, characteristic event IP is insufficient. Most existing events are introduced or homogeneous, lacking iconic IP integrated with local elements such as industry, ice and snow, and intangible cultural heritage. Compared with mature brands such as Jiangsu's "Su Chao" and Guangdong's "Long Chao", they have low recognition, limited communication and difficulty in realizing commercial value.

Second, industrial integration is inadequate. Events are mostly superficially combined with culture, tourism, catering, manufacturing and technology, failing to form a complete closed loop of "spectating – consumption – industrial feedback". The development of souvenirs and cultural and creative products lags behind, new models such as online consumption and live-streaming marketing are underused, and the efficiency of traffic conversion is low.

Third, the cross-departmental coordination mechanism is imperfect. Event organization involves sports, culture, tourism, transportation, public security, medical treatment and emergency response, but lacks a unified and efficient coordination mechanism. Connection among transportation, parking, medical care and on-site management is not smooth, which affects audience experience and event reputation [4].

Fourth, public participation is inadequate. Event supply is biased toward professional events; mass and grassroots events have narrow coverage, insufficient funding and weak influence. Public participation channels are

limited, making it difficult to form a sound atmosphere of "whole people participating, spectating and consuming".

Fifth, professional talents are in shortage. Compound talents in event planning, operation, IP building, marketing and new media communication are scarce. Some operators are weak in strength and traditional in mode, which can hardly meet the requirements of modern, market-oriented and branded event operation [5].

#### **4. Development Paths of Liaoning's Sports "Event +" Economy**

##### **4.1 Build "Liaoning-Style" Event IP and Highlight Regional Characteristics**

Event IP building is the core path for Liaoning to break homogenization and achieve differentiated development. Efforts should be made to deeply explore three characteristic resources: industry, ice and snow, and intangible cultural heritage, to create local IP with high recognition, communication capacity and sustainable operation [6].

Relying on industrial culture, launch industrial-themed events such as "Iron Will Football League", "Heavy Industry Derby" and "Steel City Basketball Invitational Tournament". Integrate industrial elements into mascots, trophies, posters and venue design, renovate old factories into special venues, and launch "event + industrial research" routes to promote the integrated development of sports and industrial civilization. Combined with the development of industrial cities in Liaoning, enterprise symbols such as Anshan Iron and Steel, Shenyang Blower and Dalian Shipbuilding are transformed into event visual systems to strengthen the internal fit between industrial spirit and sports spirit, making events an important window to display Liaoning's industrial civilization [7].

Relying on ice and snow resources, build winter IPs such as "Liaodong Peninsula Ice and Snow Championship" and "Liaoning Ice and Snow Games". Launch combined products of "skiing + spectating + hot spring + folk custom" linked with ski resorts to form a winter consumption closed loop, turning "cold resources" into "hot economy". Through unified branding, graded events and regional linkage, a year-round event system covering urban and rural areas will be formed, making ice and snow events the core attraction of winter tourism in Liaoning [8].

Integrate intangible cultural heritage into

intermission performances, interactive experiences and cultural and creative products, set up exhibition areas and experience workshops to enhance cultural added value while spectators enjoy events. Through normalized, immersive and experiential cultural integration, events will be upgraded from single sports activities to carriers of cultural communication, enhancing regional identity and external attractiveness.

Expand public participation by hosting graded events such as the Liaoning People's Football League and Folk Basketball Competition, and launch low-price spectating packages to lower participation thresholds and root events in communities. Through a three-level mass event system at provincial, municipal and county levels, linkage between professional and amateur events, and equal emphasis on competition and fitness will be realized, enabling sports events to truly enter campuses, communities, enterprises and rural areas.

##### **4.2 Innovate Consumption Scenarios and Expand the Space of Event Economy**

Scenario innovation is the key to improving the efficiency of event traffic conversion and expanding consumption scale. Adhere to the principle of "one city, one and adapting to local conditions" to create diversified, immersive and characteristic consumption scenarios.

Shenyang highlights industrial culture and launches research routes of "spectating + industrial exploration + cultural and creative shopping"; Dalian relies on coastal resources to create young-style packages of "night events + seafood barbecue + coastal camping"; Panjin, combined with Red Beach wetlands, holds wetland marathons and launches products of "events + ecological tourism + river crab tasting"; Benxi and Dandong, relying on landscape resources, carry out mountain biking, mountaineering, rafting and other outdoor events to drive rural tourism. Through the in-depth integration of urban characteristics and event scenarios, a development pattern of "one city, one product, one event, one characteristic" will be formed to improve regional recognition and tourist repurchase rate [9].

Set up "second live sites" of events in core urban business districts, build large-screen live broadcasts, fan markets and interactive game areas to activate night consumption. Relying on the general aviation industry, launch high-end

experience products such as helicopter spectating and low-altitude tours to meet diversified consumption needs. For teenagers, create packages of "events + sports training + parent-child interaction" to cultivate long-term consumer groups. Through online drainage, offline experience, scenario extension and consumption closed loop, events will move from a single venue to the whole city, and from spectating consumption to all-weather, multi-scenario and comprehensive consumption.

At the same time, promote linked promotions among events, business districts, scenic spots, hotels and catering, launch joint tickets, packages and exclusive discounts to improve the integrity and attractiveness of the overall consumption chain. Continuously enrich scenario types covering parent-child, youth, middle-aged and elderly, research, business and other groups to make the event economy more resilient and sustainable.

#### **4.3 Deepen Industrial Integration and Extend the Value Chain**

Take events as a link to promote the in-depth integration of sports with manufacturing, culture, tourism, youth training and agriculture, and build a full-chain industrial ecosystem.

Promote the integration of "events + equipment manufacturing", cooperate with enterprises such as Shenyang Siasun and Dalian Bingshan to develop intelligent training equipment, ice and snow equipment and intelligent spectating products; rely on the Huludao swimsuit industry to develop event-themed clothing and sports peripherals, realize "buy as you watch" through live-streaming marketing and on-site exhibitions, and drive the upgrading of manufacturing industry. Encourage local enterprises to name, sponsor and cooperate in hosting events, take events as a display platform to enhance brand influence, and promote the transformation from "Made in Liaoning" to "Intelligent Manufacturing in Liaoning" and "Brand in Liaoning".

Promote the integration of "events + youth training + culture and tourism", build "Liaoxiaohu" football youth training and Liaoning basketball youth training brands, build sports complexes integrating training, competition, accommodation and shopping, form a closed loop of "training – competition – tourism – shopping", and attract teenagers from all over the country to participate in training and

competitions. Through youth training drainage, event gathering and tourism retention, a long-term stable industrial model will be built to promote the mutual development of sports talent training and regional economy.

Promote the integration of "events + rural revitalization", hold farming sports meetings, rural football matches, outdoor hiking races and other events in rural areas, link homestays, picking gardens and agricultural product exhibition centers to drive rural tourism and sales of characteristic products, and help farmers increase income and rural development. Integrate sports events with rural features, folk experiences and agricultural product branding, making sports a new driver, scenario and business card for rural revitalization.

Through the in-depth embedding of multiple industries, resource sharing and complementary advantages, a virtuous development pattern of events driving industries, industries supporting events, and two-way empowerment between urban and rural areas will be formed, continuously improving the comprehensive benefits of the event economy.

#### **4.4 Strengthen Communication and Promotion and Enhance Brand Influence**

Build an online and offline integrated communication system, create phenomenal event marketing events, and enhance the national popularity of Liaoning's events.

Plan regional topical events such as "Shenyang VS Dalian Liaodong Peninsula Derby" and "Anshan VS Fushun Steel Twin Cities Showdown" to stimulate public sense of belonging and communication enthusiasm. Invite Liaoning-born athletes and stars to participate in promotion, and launch event challenges on short-video platforms to expand communication coverage. Through emotional resonance, regional identity, topic creation and national interaction, events will be transformed from local activities into communicable, discussible and popular cultural events.

Use new technologies such as VR live broadcast, 4K ultra-high-definition, digital tickets and metaverse spectating to improve the viewing experience and attract young groups. Strengthen event linkage among the three northeastern provinces, jointly build regional event brands, and promote Liaoning's event IP to the whole country. With the help of the advantages of new media communication, strengthen the production

of short, flat, fast, highly interactive and visual content, making Liaoning's events more recognizable and attractive in the national sports landscape.

At the same time, strengthen cooperation with central media, commercial platforms and sports institutions to expand event exposure and influence. Through continuous operation, stable output and brand upgrading, a number of influential Liaoning event business cards will be gradually formed to enhance urban image and regional reputation.

#### **4.5 Improve Support and Consolidate the Development Foundation**

Improve the support, service guarantee and talent training systems to provide support for the sustainable development of the event economy.

Establish a provincial-level special fund for the event economy, provide financial subsidies, tax reductions and exemptions, and venue support for characteristic events, mass events and emerging events. Optimize the approval process, implement one-stop services and improve the efficiency of event organization. Through precise, inclusive and market-oriented mix, reduce the cost of event organization, attract the participation of social forces and stimulate market vitality.

Establish a cross-departmental overall coordination mechanism to uniformly provide transportation, security, medical care, emergency and other guarantees, and improve the operation level of events. Improve event service specifications, extend the operation time of public transport, add fan special lines, optimize parking management, and enhance audience experience. Through standardized, refined and humanized services, shape high-quality event reputation and enhance public sense of gain and satisfaction.

Strengthen talent training, support colleges and universities to offer majors such as event operation and sports marketing, introduce high-end talents, carry out employee training, and establish an incentive mechanism to provide talent support for the high-quality development of the event economy. Promote the construction of the whole chain of talent "introduction, education, retention and use", and continuously improve the professional level of event planning, operation, management and promotion.

Through the trinity support system of , service and talent, a solid institutional foundation and

development environment will be built for the steady and long-term development of Liaoning's sports "event +" economy.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Liaoning's sports "event +" economy has multiple advantages in resources, industry, market and, with huge potential and broad prospects. At present, it still faces practical problems such as weak IP, incomplete chain, inadequate supporting services and low participation. However, through the five-in-one path of building characteristic IP, innovating consumption scenarios, deepening industrial integration, strengthening communication and promotion, and improving support, the bottlenecks can be effectively solved and the vitality of the event economy can be fully released. From a practical perspective, the event economy can not only directly drive instant consumption such as spectating, catering, accommodation and shopping, but also promote the coordinated upgrading of sports manufacturing, cultural creativity, cultural tourism, education and training and other related industries, forming sustainable economic growth points.

At the critical stage of Liaoning's comprehensive revitalization, the sports "event +" economy can effectively gather social consensus, boost development confidence, display urban image, and become a distinctive starting point and bright business card for the transformation and revitalization of old industrial bases in the new era. The sports "event +" economy can not only promote the high-quality development of Liaoning's sports industry, but also drive consumption growth, promote industrial transformation, enhance urban image and strengthen regional cohesion, injecting lasting impetus into Liaoning's comprehensive revitalization and providing a practical model for the transformation and revitalization of old industrial bases in Northeast China. In the future, Liaoning should continue to deepen the event economy, promote the in-depth integration of events with cities, industries and culture, and make sports a truly loud business card for Liaoning's revitalization in the new era. With the continuous improvement of the event system, continuous optimization of the industrial ecology and gradual expansion of brand influence, the sports "event +" model will surely play a more important role in Liaoning's

comprehensive revitalization, and blaze a new path of sports empowering regional development with Northeast characteristics, Liaoning features and the characteristics of the times.

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