Vol.7 Iss.2 2026
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.adr.2026.009
Art & Design Research

Design Pathways for Tourism Cultural and Creative Products Incorporating Mojiang Intangible Cultural Heritage Elements from the Perspective of Digital Translation

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Abstract

Against the background of the continuing integration of culture and tourism and the rapid development of digital media, tourism cultural and creative products based on Yunnan intangible cultural heritage (ICH) still face several problems, including superficial use of cultural symbols, product homogenization, insufficient practicality, and fragmented digital interaction. Taking the visual identity system of the Mojiang cultural tourism brand as a case study, this research employs literature review, symbol extraction, case analysis, and prototype analysis to examine resources including Hani culture, the legend of the silver pheasant, the Tropic of Cancer, the International Twins Festival, purple rice, and terraced landscapes, and to analyze their transformation into intellectual-property (IP) characters, derivative cultural and creative products, and a tourism mini-program. The findings indicate that digital translation is not the replication of traditional patterns. Rather, it converts cultural content into recognizable, reusable, and communicable design units through resource identification, semantic encoding, visual assetization, productization in specific scenarios, and interactive communication. The Mojiang case establishes a coordinated structure of "IP characters–cultural and creative products–digital interaction." It demonstrates that local cultural tourism brands should take cultural semantics as their core, unify the visual language of characters, products, and interfaces, and construct a continuous experience extending from cultural cognition and tourism services to consumption and communication. On this basis, the study proposes a five-step design pathway for Yunnan ICH-based tourism cultural and creative products, providing a reference for cultural tourism branding and ICH revitalization in ethnic-minority regions.

Keywords:

Mojiang Intangible Cultural Heritage ;Digital Translation ;Tourism Cultural and Creative Product Design

1 Introduction

Yunnan is rich in ethnic cultures, natural landscapes, and intangible cultural heritage resources, providing a distinctive local foundation for the development of tourism cultural and creative products. As tourism consumption moves beyond sightseeing alone, visitors increasingly look for cultural experience, affective iden-

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tification, and content worth sharing. Under these conditions, the competitive strength of a cultural-tourism brand depends in large part on whether local resources can be translated into a design language that remains coherent, recognizable, and usable across sustained applications. For cultural and creative products, regional culture is not peripheral material but a primary source of differentiation; it also supports the development of cultural industries and the enhancement of cultural soft power [1]. Within the context of culture–tourism integration, ICH can enter contemporary use through concrete tourism scenarios, where its living transmission, public communication, and value transformation become more visible to visitors and thus more likely to strengthen public awareness and identification [2]. Digital media have altered how ICH content is produced, presented, and circulated. In this sense, technological innovation has not only changed delivery channels but has also reconfigured the production, communication, and display of ICH content [3]. At the same time, the widespread adoption of mobile applications in the digital era has brought new opportunities and challenges for the safeguarding and transmission of ICH [4]. Digitalization therefore should not be limited to uploading images, archiving materials, or decorating interfaces; it should extend throughout cultural-resource organization, visual transformation, product development, and interactive services. Merely changing the communication carrier, without connecting cultural semantics, functional structure, and user behavior, is unlikely to generate stable brand recognition for ICH content.

Although the development of cultural and creative products in Yunnan already has a certain market foundation, many products remain conventional souvenirs decorated with patterns, with insufficient exploration of local narratives, similar design forms, and fragmented digital touchpoints. Cultural tourism design should not treat ICH elements merely as detachable graphic materials; rather, they should be understood as integrated design resources comprising cultural semantics, visual forms, and application scenarios.

Mojiang Hani Autonomous County combines Hani culture, the Tropic of Cancer, the International Twins Festival, purple-rice products, and ecological landscapes, giving it strong potential for regional branding. However, abundant resources do not automatically produce a clear brand image. This study selects Mojiang cultural tourism design not simply to present a set of design outcomes, but to examine a transferable pathway: beginning with local cultural resources, digital translation converts them into cross-media outputs such as IP characters, derivative cultural and creative products, and a tourism mini-program, ultimately forming a complete chain of "cultural identification–product experience–digital communication." The discussion is organized around five aspects: theory and methods, analysis of Mojiang's cultural resources, the digital-translation design pathway, case discussion, and conclusions and recommendations.

2 Current State of Yunnan Cultural Tourism Design from the Perspective of Digital Translation

From the perspective of digital translation, the principal problem facing Yunnan cultural tourism design is not a lack of resources, but the absence of an integrated system linking cultural semantics, product functions, and digital media. Localized design theory emphasizes that product design should be deeply integrated with the natural environment, cultural context, social reality, and user needs of a specific place. However, cultural and creative design often lacks systematic organization and integration of ethnic cultural elements, resulting in fragmented and superficial representations and insufficient expression of deeper cultural narratives

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and spiritual meanings [5]. The development of ICH-based cultural and creative products still relies heavily on common carriers such as keychains, refrigerator magnets, postcards, and canvas bags. Cultural symbols frequently remain surface decoration and are weakly connected to product structure, modes of use, and the tourism process. Logos, IP characters, packaging, wayfinding, and online pages are also often developed as separate projects, without unified rules for color, graphics, and narrative. Digital applications similarly tend to emphasize content display. Some ICH apps merely transfer information originally presented on paper into an application, changing only the carrier rather than creating an immersive and engaging user experience [6].

Accordingly, the design transformation of ICH elements should move beyond pattern replication or symbolic collage and establish correspondences among cultural authenticity, contemporary aesthetics, product functionality, and audience needs. For tourism cultural and creative products in Yunnan's ethnic-minority areas, such correspondence is both a prerequisite for regional distinctiveness and an important constraint against superficial cultural representation.

3 Theoretical Framework and Methods

In this article, "digital translation" denotes a design process in which ICH and other local cultural resources are taken out of their original life settings and reworked—through semantic decomposition, formal abstraction, digital assetization, and contextual recombination—into design units that can be recognized, reused, interacted with, and communicated in contemporary tourism cultural and creative systems. Unlike digital preservation, which is mainly concerned with documentation and retention, digital translation is oriented toward design deployment and user experience. It is also more than graphic restyling. Whereas visual redesign may stop at surface embellishment, digital translation requires the coordination of cultural meaning, media form, and context of use. For regional cultural elements to be translated in this way, their interpretation must be accurate. The process therefore depends on [AUTHOR INPUT REQUIRED: types, scope, and selection criteria of visual and textual materials], an understanding of the historical formation and humanistic spirit of the regional culture, an examination of its modes of expression, and the selection of cultural elements that are both representative and suitable for the information the design is intended to convey [7].

This study works with an integrated three-layer framework that combines cultural semiotics, design research, and user-centered design. At the semiotic level, ICH elements are read in terms of form, narrative meaning, and social function. In the present case, for instance, the silver pheasant operates not simply as a bird image but as a carrier of Hani legend, auspicious implication, and dance vocabulary; the Tropic of Cancer functions not only as a geographic sign but also as the narrative center of the "turning sun" in Mojiang's urban brand. At the level of design research, the case is traced from resource extraction to the development of IP, cultural and creative products, and interface design so that reusable design methods can be identified. At the user-centered level, the analysis asks whether the resulting products and mini-program address tourist needs such as recognition, navigation, purchasing, sharing, and emotional memory.

The research draws on literature review, case analysis, symbol extraction, and prototype analysis. The literature review is used to identify practical problems and development directions in Yunnan cultural and creative products [AUTHOR INPUT REQUIRED: databases, time span, and screening criteria]. Case analysis

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focuses on the IP characters, cultural and creative products, and app/mini-program interfaces developed for Mojiang cultural tourism [AUTHOR INPUT REQUIRED: grounds for case selection]. Symbol extraction is used to map relationships among "cultural resources–visual elements–application scenarios." Prototype analysis examines the tourism mini-program in terms of information architecture, page functions, and interaction logic [AUTHOR INPUT REQUIRED: prototype version, evaluator(s), or testing procedure]. On this basis, the study summarizes digital translation as a five-stage process: "resource collection–element identification–visual translation–design application–integrated optimization" (Figure 1).

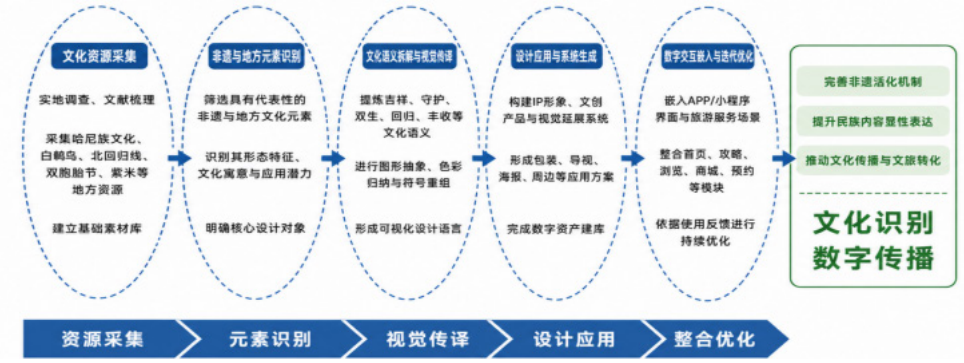


Figure 1. Digital-translation design process.

The core of the model is a "shared-source, multi-application" principle. "Shared source" means that all design outcomes derive from the same selected set of local cultural semantics, while "multiple applications" means that these semantics can be transformed into characters, products, interfaces, motion effects, and communication content. Only by establishing this relationship can a local cultural tourism brand avoid stylistic fragmentation, repetitive content, and confused recognition across different products.

4 Design Pathways for Digital Translation: The Case of Mojiang Cultural Tourism Design

This section takes the visual identity system of Mojiang cultural tourism as a case study. Its value lies in moving cultural tourism branding beyond a single logo or promotional poster and establishing, on the basis of local cultural resources, a mutually supportive system of IP characters, derivative cultural and creative products, and a tourism mini-program. The system can be summarized as a three-stage digital-translation pathway. The first stage translates local culture into IP characters to create memorable brand cues; the second translates IP characters into cultural and creative products to support cultural consumption and everyday use; and the third translates visual assets into app/mini-program interactions to support tourism services, digital communication, and purchase conversion.

4.1 IP Character Development and Design-Element Extraction

The design positions the Mojiang cultural tourism IP around the concepts of "Home of the Hani," "Home of Twins," "City of the Tropic," and "Home of Purple Rice," and develops a chibi-style character system. The Mojiang cultural tourism IP is developed around four place concepts—"Home of the Hani," "Home of Twins," "City of the Tropic," and "Home of Purple Rice"—and is expressed through a chibi-style character

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system. Its main figures are Momo, an anthropomorphic silver pheasant, and the twin characters Yanyan and Miaomiao. “Momo” is derived from the name of Mojiang County, and the character draws on the silver pheasant as it appears in Hani belief. Accordingly, the silver pheasant is treated not as a generic bird motif but as a design carrier linked to Hani reverence for the species, the Silver Pheasant Dance, and auspicious symbolism. Yanyan and Miaomiao are derived from Mojiang’s twin culture together with the sun-and-moon imagery associated with the Tropic of Cancer. Their reduplicated names also differentiate their personalities: Yanyan suggests enthusiasm and vitality, whereas Miaomiao suggests gentleness and wisdom. The main color scheme consists of yellow, blue, and brown, corresponding respectively to terraced fields, rivers, and soil. Yellow additionally carries associations with Hani enthusiasm, festivity, harvest, and solar imagery [8]. The Mojiang cultural tourism IP character design is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Mojiang cultural tourism IP character design.

4.2 Analysis of the Digital Translation of the Mojiang IP Characters

Viewed through digital translation, the IP design involves at least four transformations. The first is the anthropomorphic recasting of species imagery: the silver pheasant shifts from a natural and folkloric image to a chibi-style character, which makes the cultural resource more approachable for younger tourists. The second is the conversion of cultural reference into character identity. Rather than functioning as visual forms alone, the characters are given traits—enthusiasm, friendliness, protection, and companionship—that support repeated use in mini-programs, sticker packs, and cultural and creative products. The third is semantic work through color. Yellow, blue, and brown correspond to terraced fields, rivers, and soil, while yellow also signifies Hani enthusiasm, festivity, and harvest. The fourth is the activation of movement. Gestures such as jumping, waving, guiding, and interacting convey the vitality of Mojiang culture and create a basis for later motion design and interface micro-interactions.

4.3 Application of the IP to Cultural and Creative Products

The cultural and creative product line is organized around everyday goods and small-format derivatives. It includes character-expression keychains, cups, May Day promotional apparel, tote bags and packaging boxes, as well as plush versions of Momo, Yanyan, and Miaomiao [8]. Across these items, the established characters, expressions, and brand colors are applied directly. In practical terms, digital translation appears here as the transfer of one IP graphic system from the character sheets to multiple physical carriers—including tickets, apparel, drinkware, packaging, and plush toys—while keeping character proportions, clothing, and the core color scheme consistent. An analysis of Mojiang IP derivative cultural and creative products is provided in Table 1, and examples of the IP applications are shown in Figure 3.

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Table 1. Analysis of Mojiang IP derivative cultural and creative products.

Product category	Representative products	Translated elements	Design priorities	Cultural communication value
Souvenir	Badges, stickers, keychains, postcards	Momo portrait; twin characters; Tropic of Cancer	Lightweight; affordable; easy to share	Encourages immediate purchases and social sharing by tourists
Everyday-use	Canvas bags, cups, notebooks, phone cases	Full-body IP characters; Hani patterns; terraced-field lines	Practical; visually enduring; suitable for sustained use	Extends everyday exposure to the cultural tourism brand
Local-product packaging	Purple-rice gift boxes; souvenir packaging	Purple-rice palette; rice-grain graphics; sun motifs	Unifies local products and brand visuals	Promotes purchase conversion for local specialties
Festival	Twins Festival sets; festival posters; limited-edition stickers	Yanyan; Miaomiao; symmetrical composition	Coordinated sets; festive atmosphere	Strengthens memory of the Mojiang festival brand
Experiential	Study-tour handbook; check-in map; guide cards	IP guiding gestures; attraction icons	Route-based and task-based interaction	Enhances tourist participation and cultural understanding

Table 1 shows that the design value of cultural and creative products lies not only in the commodities themselves, but also in their capacity to connect IP characters, cultural semantics, and tourist behavior. From the perspective of digital translation, this approach can be extended by adding QR codes to product packaging or guide cards and linking them to attraction introductions, augmented-reality animations, IP voice narration, or an online store within the mini-program. Offline cultural and creative products can thereby become entry points to online interaction, transforming static commodities into hybrid media that integrate physical products and digital content.



Figure 3. Applications of the Mojiang IP and cultural and creative product display.

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The role of digital translation in cultural and creative products is first reflected in the modularization of visual assets. IP characters, auxiliary patterns, the color system, Tropic of Cancer graphics, purple-rice graphics, and terraced-field lines should be organized into a reusable digital asset library. Different combinations can then be selected according to product area, material, price, and use scenario: small-format products are suitable for character portraits and simplified icons; medium-format products can use full-body IP characters and auxiliary patterns; and large-format products can incorporate narrative illustrations, maps, festival scenes, and complete visual backgrounds. This approach maintains brand unity while avoiding the monotony of repeatedly applying the same image to every product.

4.4 Information Architecture and Interface Design of the Mojiang Tourism App

The Mojiang Tourism App is the most direct manifestation of digital translation in the case study. It is positioned as a mobile tool that integrates tourism information and services for Mojiang. Its information architecture comprises five main modules—Home, Itinerary, Explore, Store, and Profile. Home provides search, a feature menu, popular recommendations, and selected routes; Itinerary includes short- and long-distance trips, customization by month or date, and check-ins; Explore includes attraction details, cloud-based interpretation, study-tour activities, and navigation; Store provides cultural and creative products and favorites; and Profile includes personal information, orders, pending deliveries, settings, reviews, and favorites. The principal framework and functions are listed in Table 2. Unlike a conventional tourism publicity page, this structure does more than move posters, images, and text onto a screen; it organizes local cultural identification, tourism services, and purchase conversion into a continuous user flow.

Table 2. Original information architecture and functions of the Mojiang Tourism App.

Main module	Sections	Primary functions
Home	Search; feature menu; popular recommendations; selected routes	View current information and recommendations for attractions, food, hotels, and transport
Itinerary	Trips; short-/long-distance routes; customization; check-ins	View official routes, customize itineraries, and check in along the route
Explore	Details; cloud-based interpretation; study-tour activities; navigation	Browse attraction details and use AI interpretation, intelligent audio guides, and VR panoramas
Store	Cultural and creative products; favorites	Browse and purchase Mojiang specialty products and food, and save related content
Profile	Personal information; orders; pending delivery; settings; reviews; favorites	Edit personal information, review orders, evaluate experiences, and manage favorites

The main navigation icons extract regional elements from Mojiang: the Tropic of Cancer Tower corresponds to Home, the book of the Confucian Temple corresponds to Explore, a mapped route corresponds to Itinerary, Hani silver ornamentation corresponds to Store, and the landmark Twin Well corresponds to Profile. The interface flow begins with a splash screen and three onboarding screens, followed by registration/login and AI character selection, through which users may choose Momo, Yanyan, or Miaomiao. After entering the main interface, users complete tasks across the five navigation pages, including viewing information, customizing routes, browsing attractions, using AI interpretation and virtual-reality panoramas, purchasing local products, and managing orders and favorites. The app information architecture and icon design are shown in

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Figure 4, and the high-fidelity interface design is shown in Figure 5.

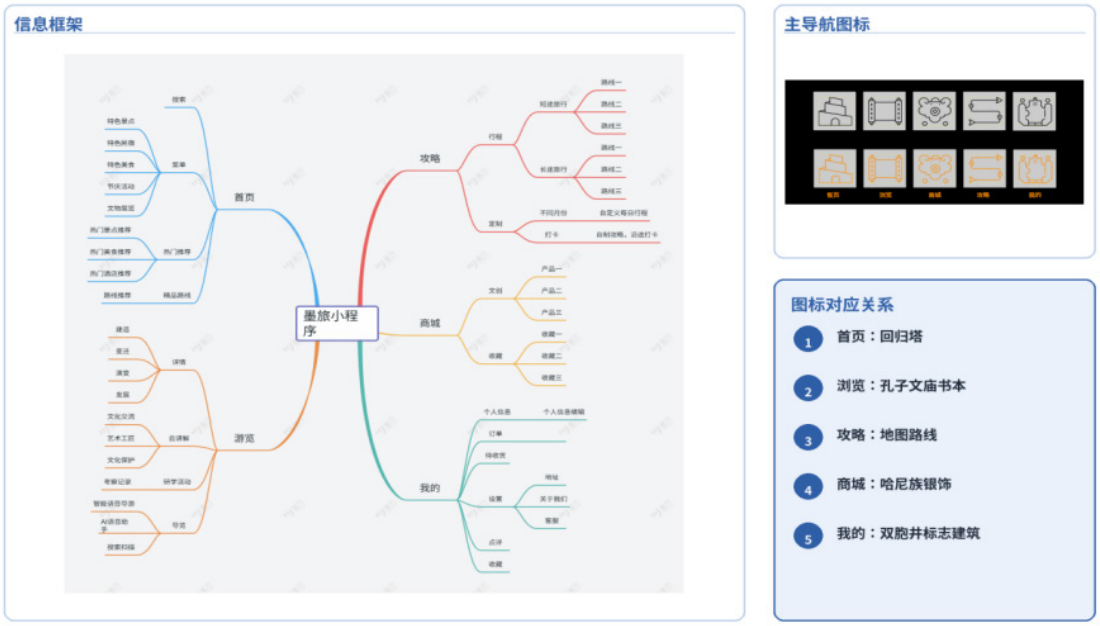


Figure 4. Information architecture and icon design of the Mojiang Tourism App.

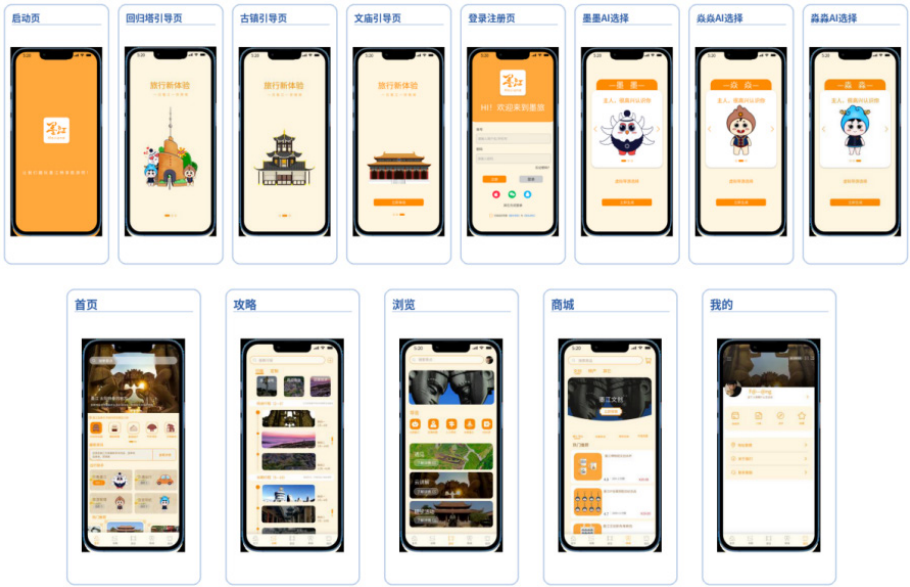


Figure 5. High-fidelity interface design of the Mojiang Tourism App.

The focus of digital translation in the Mojiang Tourism App is not simply to beautify the interface, but to embed cultural symbols in the user's operational flow. For example, when users browse the Tropic of Cancer Marker Park, the interface can display guidance from Momo together with a solar animation; when users view an itinerary for the International Twins Festival, the theme can switch to the twin characters Yanyan and Miaomiao; and when users purchase a purple-rice gift box, they can access short-form content on the cultivation, processing, and culinary culture of purple rice. In this way, cultural information no longer remains background description but becomes experiential content within each step of the user journey.

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The design logic of the Mojiang case is not to complete the IP, products, and mini-program separately, but to make all three jointly serve the local brand. The IP lowers the threshold for understanding, cultural and creative products extend the duration of cultural contact, and the mini-program integrates information services and consumption pathways. Only through the coordination of these components can a relatively complete digital-translation system for cultural tourism be established.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

From the perspective of digital translation, this study uses Mojiang cultural tourism design as a case to discuss the pathway through which Yunnan ICH elements enter a tourism cultural and creative product system. The findings indicate that the key to ICH-based tourism design lies not in the number of cultural symbols used, but in whether a complete chain can be established from cultural resources to design semantics, from visual assets to product scenarios, and from static display to digital interaction. Through the principal silver-pheasant IP character Momo, the supporting twin characters Yanyan and Miaomiao, derivative cultural and creative products, and a tourism mini-program prototype, the Mojiang case forms a relatively clear integrated model of "IP characters + cultural and creative products + digital interaction," providing a useful reference for local cultural tourism branding.

Based on the findings, five recommendations are proposed. First, cultural tourism design in Yunnan's ethnic-minority regions should prioritize the establishment of cultural-resource databases and systematically classify ICH, festivals, local products, landmarks, folk narratives, and natural ecology. Second, IP design should begin with local cultural prototypes, avoid the unsupported accumulation of cartoon imagery, and establish standardized character guidelines. Third, cultural and creative products should improve practicality and series development so that cultural elements can enter tourists' everyday lives. Fourth, digital interaction design should center on the tourist journey and integrate navigation, itinerary planning, shopping, check-ins, and sharing into a continuous experience. Fifth, a design-evaluation mechanism should be established to support ongoing product optimization through tourist feedback, sales data, interface testing, and the views of local communities.

Overall, digital translation is not a superficial digital packaging of traditional culture, but a design method oriented toward contemporary cultural tourism communication. It requires designers to understand local culture while also mastering visual systems, product development, and interactive experience. The Mojiang case demonstrates that when ICH elements are accurately identified, appropriately encoded, systematically applied, and embedded in authentic tourism scenarios, a local cultural tourism brand can move from resource display to experience construction and from one-time communication to sustained memory.

Funding

Yunnan Provincial Department of Education Scientific Research Fund Project: Digital Design of Cloud Tourism Cultural and Creative Products Based on Intangible Cultural Heritage (NO.2025J0762).

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