

From Viral Fame to Enduring Appeal: The Making of Sustainable Cultural and Tourism Consumption Scenes in Jimei District, Xiamen

Yuanzhen Zhao*

Xiamen Institute of Technology, Xiamen, Fujian 361021, China

*Corresponding author, E-mail: yuanzhenzhaow@outlook.com

Abstract

Represented by the Jimei School Village, the Ten-Mile Causeway, and the core area of Jimei New Town, Jimei District of Xiamen has formed a cluster of new cultural and tourism consumption scenes of paradigmatic significance. Taking Jimei as a case and drawing on scene theory and the experience economy, this article adopts a speculative-analytical approach to dissect, layer by layer, the generative logic of new cultural and tourism consumption scenes. The study argues that the competitiveness of new scenes lies not in spectacular landscapes but in the density of relationships: traffic is a victory of visibility, whereas retention is a victory of relationality. The Jimei experience reveals a coupling mechanism among four logics—media visibility, emotional healing, the reproduction of place-ness, and governance-operation—while also exposing four latent risks: the tides of traffic, scene homogenization, host–guest dislocation, and emotional overdraft. Accordingly, the article proposes a governance shift from building scenes to cultivating scenes, providing a reference for local governments seeking to foster a sustainable cultural and tourism consumption ecosystem.

Keywords:

new cultural and tourism consumption scenes, scene theory, place attachment, internet-famous cities, Jimei District

1 Statement of the Problem

In the early evening on Jimei's Ten-Mile Causeway, the lawn fills with young people waiting for the sunset. Metro Line 1 glides across the sea, and images of the train against the evening glow are shared countless times; a sea wall built for tide protection has thus become one of Xiamen's most celebrated sunset-watching spots. A few kilometers away in the Jimei School Village, century-old school buildings are reflected in the waters of Dragon Boat Pond, residents often sit chatting in front of the Dashe opera stage, and tourists and students thread along the same stone-paved lanes. Further north, the theaters, circus, and commercial complexes of the Jimei New Town core light up one after another after dark, forming a national-level night-time cultural and tourism consumption cluster. These three tableaux compose the everyday landscape of cultural and tourism consumption in Jimei District, and they constitute the specimen this article seeks to dissect.

Jimei was chosen first because it is small enough—small enough that the texture of every scene can be

seen clearly—yet complete enough to contain almost all the elements from which new scenes are generated. According to publicly released statistics, in 2025 the district received 29.73 million tourist visits and realized tourism revenue of 19.5 billion yuan; during the 14th Five-Year Plan period it received a cumulative 109 million visits, an increase of more than 40 percent over the 13th Five-Year Plan period. The decency of the numbers is beyond doubt, but the questions behind the numbers must not be absent. Traffic has arrived—but has staying occurred? Has consumption settled? Has the place been better understood as a result, or merely consumed more quickly?

At the theoretical level, new scenes are not without provenance. Whether night-time cultural and tourism consumption clusters, as a policy instrument, can genuinely activate county-level economies has already received a cautiously affirmative answer from scholars using a difference-in-differences model (Zheng, He, et al., 2026). Tourism destination research has traveled forty years, its center of gravity shifting from resource endowment to the logic of traffic; how to move from viral fame to enduring appeal has become a shared anxiety of academia and industry alike (Chen, Zhao, & Liu, 2026). Regrettably, existing discussions mostly remain at the level of macro narrative and hotspot tracking, lacking close-up observation of the scene ecology inside a single urban district; fewer still are willing to lower the camera to look at the subtle changes of a sea wall, a school village, and a new town.

This article takes Jimei as a small incision and attempts to make a large matter of a small topic. The small topic is the narrowing of focus to several concrete scenes in one urban district; the large matter is the layer-by-layer pursuit of how new scenes are generated, how they move people, and how they endure. Rather than compiling a comprehensive industrial inventory, this article seeks, in a speculative manner, to answer one question: by what means can new cultural and tourism consumption scenes move from traffic to retention, from going viral to staying popular?

Placed in a larger policy context, the small incision becomes clearer. Cultivating new cultural and tourism consumption scenes and expanding service consumption is a proposition repeatedly emphasized from the central to the local level in recent years, and policy instruments such as night-time clusters, tourism leisure districts, and immersive formats have been rolled out in succession. Jimei is almost a complete experimental field for these instruments: in 2020 it became Xiamen's first national all-for-one tourism demonstration zone; in 2022 the Jimei New Town core was designated a national-level night-time cultural and tourism consumption cluster; and planning for a central vitality zone has since been launched. Policy has given Jimei a stage, but how the play on that stage is performed still depends on the district's own skill.

A note on methodological self-awareness is in order. This is a speculative study: it relies not on questionnaires or econometric models but on long-term field observation, publicly available statistics, and dialogue with existing literature. The value of speculation lies not in avoiding experience but in conceptualizing empirical material—organizing scattered phenomena into discussable problems. Jimei's experience is a condensation of what countless urban districts across China are undergoing; to dissect Jimei is also to hold up a mirror to cultural and tourism practice on a larger scale.



2 Re-examining the Concept

“Scene” is one of the busiest and most ambiguous words in current cultural and tourism discourse. Sometimes it denotes an installation, sometimes a space, and sometimes simply a synonym for marketing. If the concept is not clarified, discussion will spin idly upon slogans. Recent scholarly efforts deserve attention: building on the scene theory of the New Chicago School, one study proposes an analytical framework for digital-intelligent cultural and tourism scenes, understanding the scene as a meaning-production system jointly constituted by cultural values, technological mediation, and spatial practice (Su & Yang, 2026). The inspiration of this definition lies in its recognition that the core of a scene is not the thing itself, but the relationships and meanings that the thing organizes.

Taking a longer view, the rise of experience had early harbingers. In their classic account of the experience economy, Pine and Gilmore (1998) pointed out that as goods and services become homogeneous, the center of business shifts to staging memorable experiences for consumers. More than two decades on, this judgment has been repeatedly vindicated in the field of culture and tourism—and seriously misread. The misreading lies in equating experience with sensory stimulation and scenes with stage sets, hence the proliferation of glass walkways and copy-paste photo-op installations.

The new cultural and tourism consumption scenes discussed in this article have three defining properties. The first is media visibility: a scene must be photographable, shareable, and algorithmically amplified, otherwise it can hardly enter the decision chain of contemporary consumers. The second is emotional evocativeness: a scene must be able to accommodate some genuine emotional need, whether relaxation, healing, or nostalgic longing for home. The third is everyday embeddedness: a scene is not a bonsai suspended above life but should be embedded in the daily rhythms of local residents and passers-by. If any one of the three is missing, a scene degenerates into a disposable backdrop. In what follows, these three properties serve as the yardstick by which Jimei’s gains and losses are measured.

The newness of new scenes becomes distinct only in contrast with traditional supply. Traditional scenic areas sell the scarcity of landscapes; traditional commercial streets sell the abundance of goods; both presuppose the possession of things. New scenes sell the generation of relationships: tourists are no longer content to see and be seen but demand to enter, to participate, and to share the moment with others. The implication for the supply side is subversive: landscapes can be copied and goods can be ordered in, but the relationships that grow between people and place cannot be wholesaled. Understanding this makes clear why some heavily invested scenic areas stand deserted while a free sea wall teems with visitors.

In terms of policy genealogy, the popularity of the term “new scene” has a clear lineage. In 2024, the National Development and Reform Commission and other departments issued a document on creating new consumption scenes and cultivating new consumption growth points, and new consumption scenes thereafter entered the center of policy discourse. Subsequent deployments concerning service consumption and cultural and tourism consumption have all made scene innovation a lever for expanding domestic demand. Dense policy endorsement is a double-edged sword: it provides legitimacy and resources for new scenes, but it may also induce herd-like homogeneous competition. Clarifying the concept is therefore not only a theoretical need but also a precondition for policy implementation.

3An Anatomy of Three Scenes in Jimei

3.1The School-Village Scene: How Everyday Life Becomes Landscape

The Jimei School Village is not a scenic area—at least it did not begin as one. It is the legacy of Mr. Tan Kah-kee's devotion of his fortune to education, a complex of Kah-kee architecture described as “wearing bamboo hats and Western suits,” and a set of classrooms, canteens, and dormitories still in daily use by more than one hundred thousand teachers and students. Its moving quality lies precisely in life itself, un-staged. Research on the renewal of historic districts reminds us that the coupling of cultural-heritage activation with consumption scenes must not destroy the continuity of local life (Xu et al., 2026). The value of the School Village lies in the fact that it was never relocated wholesale and never fenced off for ticketing; life still happens in place, and the landscape is an overflow of life rather than its replacement.

The rise of the citywalk has provided a new way of opening up this everydayness. Research on tourism leisure districts shows that the online influence of the citywalk rests not only on product supply but also on the construction of consumption scenes, the display of regional characteristics, and the realization of host–guest sharing (Wang et al., 2025). During the Spring Festival of 2026, Jimei launched the School Village “Fortune Horses” event, scattering eight creative horse installations carrying Southern Fujian blessings across the School Village and pairing them with citywalk routes and a stamp-collection lottery; in the course of their search, visitors naturally strung together restaurants, lodgings, and small shops. The cleverness of this design is that it built nothing new—it merely recoded the existing everyday into a playable game.

Young people are the most active variable in the School-Village scene. Residents aged fourteen to thirty-five account for more than 45 percent of Jimei's population, and the roughly 150,000 teachers and students of more than a dozen universities form a sizable young community. Youth are not spectators to be pleased by scenes; they are co-producers of scenes. The impromptu singing in front of the Dashe opera stage, graduation photographs by Dragon Boat Pond, and the affordable small shops on Shigu Road are all scenes chosen by young people with their feet. What the School Village offers youth is not spectacle but an affordable, participatory lifestyle in which they can place their youth.

The School-Village scene has a further, easily overlooked depth: the production of meaning. Kah-kee architecture is material heritage; the Kah-kee spirit is meaning heritage. Relying on the School Village and the Ao Garden, Jimei has developed study-tour programs; cross-strait study-tour groups have cumulatively exceeded 210,000 person-times, and the Fujian–Taiwan study-tour base has been designated a national-level cross-strait exchange base. The essence of the study tour is to turn visiting into understanding and one-time viewing into portable meaning. While other districts compete over the size of installations, the School Village offers the thickness of narrative. Buildings age; spirit stays new—this is the deepest moat of the School-Village scene.

Host–guest coexistence is not a slogan; it requires refined spatial arrangements to support it. The wisdom of the School Village lies in zoning without separation: teaching areas keep quiet and orderly, Dragon Boat Pond, the Nanxun building cluster, and Shigu Road are open to all, and the lanes of Dashe maintain a resident-first scale. Tourists are permitted to enter but are not indulged to the point of disturbing daily life. This sense of proportion did not come from any planning document but from a publicness sedimented over a cen-



tury of the School Village's educational tradition. It reminds us that the foundation of host–guest sharing is the publicness of space, not the technique of management.

3.2 The Coastal Scene: The Mediatized Romance of the Ten-Mile Causeway

The rise of the Ten-Mile Causeway had almost no official script. Sunset, sea wall, the sea-crossing metro, and lawn concerts—these elements were originally scattered along Jimei's coastline, and it was short video and social platforms that assembled them into a romance. Scholars of internet-famous cities describe this process with the concept of affordance: contingent viral events deepen the public's perception of local resources, awakening dormant potential place affordances and thereby attracting government, enterprises, and tourists to join in the remaking of place (Zheng & Luo, 2026). So it is with the Ten-Mile Causeway: the sea wall is still the sea wall; media made it seen anew.

Worth pondering is media's reconstruction of emotional ties to place. A systematic review shows that travel short videos and destination livestreaming are changing the generative path of place attachment: attachment no longer needs to be slowly cultivated through personal arrival but may first be rehearsed on the screen and then verified on site (Shi et al., 2025). Empirical research on internet-famous tourism destinations such as the Village Super League further finds that tourists set out via media and come for the place itself rather than merely for an event (Shu et al., 2025). The sunset of the Ten-Mile Causeway thus has a dual identity: it is both a natural landscape and an emotional token repeatedly confirmed by media. Young people come here less to watch the sunset than to keep a date already promised by social media.

The fragility of this mediatized romance is equally evident. Sunsets happen every day; traffic does not necessarily. When shooting templates converge and the same sunset appears on more coastlines, by what means can the Ten-Mile Causeway keep people's hearts? The answer may lie not inside the lens but outside it: picnics on the lawn, concerts by the sea, and the walk from the metro exit to the causeway together constitute a slowed-down route. Media is responsible for arrival; experience is responsible for staying—and this division of labor determines the half-life of traffic.

The Ten-Mile Causeway also poses an interesting economic question: how can a free landscape drive paid consumption? The causeway charges no admission, the lawn collects no rent, and the sunset itself cannot be priced; yet the flow of people arriving at the causeway feeds the surrounding coffee carts, market stalls, shops along the metro line, and guesthouses. The conversion mechanism is the layer-by-layer percolation of attention into the consumption chain: visitors pay time and footwork for the sunset and then complete spending on food, shopping, and lodging nearby. The free scene plays the role of traffic entrance; paid commerce completes the realization of value. Once this layer is understood, one will no longer measure the value of new scenes with ticket-thinking.

3.3 The Night-Time Scene: The Consumption Theater of the New Town Core

Unlike the spontaneous growth of the School Village and the causeway, the Jimei New Town core displays a distinctly planned character. The water gardens of the Garden Expo Park, the giant theater of the Lingling International Circus, the Legend of Southern Fujian show at the Old Courtyard scenic area, live music at the Star Nest Crossover Center, stage productions at the Kah-kee Arts Center, and commercial complexes such

as Joy City together constitute a theater cluster of night-time consumption. In 2022 this area was designated a national-level night-time cultural and tourism consumption cluster, and empirical research on such clusters shows that this policy instrument can indeed activate county-level economic vitality, with effects that spill over spatially (Zheng, He, et al., 2026).

The logic of night-time scenes differs from that of daytime. Night strips away the functionality of sightseeing and amplifies the emotionality of entertainment; consumers are more relaxed and more willing to pay for atmosphere. During the Spring Festival of 2026, Joy City partnered with the Dunhuang Museum on a themed exhibition; holiday footfall exceeded 580,000 visits and sales surpassed 33 million yuan. This detail shows that once a commercial complex allies itself with culture and art, it can be upgraded from a shopping venue into the site of a cultural event. The competitiveness of night-time clusters increasingly depends on the capacity to produce cultural content, not on the volume of property.

Yet theatricalized night-time consumption has its limits. Performances, light shows, and markets are asset-heavy, operation-intensive formats; the slightest lag in content renewal brings a rapid fall in footfall. The policy dividend of night-time clusters can light up a district, but it cannot answer the old question on the district's behalf: why would people come again?

Jimei's hand in fact holds more than theaters. The Xiamen film and television production base has settled in Jimei; nearly one thousand film and television enterprises have registered, and the district has served hundreds of production crews. Filming locations write Jimei's coastline and old streets into dramas, and the broadcast of those dramas brings Jimei new viewers—another loop of the media logic. If the night-time cluster can form content linkage with the film and television industry, letting shooting, screening, performance, and night touring supply one another with subjects and audiences, the asset-heavy predicament of the theater cluster may find a lighter solution.

4The Fourfold Logic of Scene Formation

4.1Media Logic: The Production and Distribution of Visibility

In an era when algorithms allocate attention, visibility is a scarce resource, and a scene's degree of mediation largely determines its market radius. The aforementioned case study of Changsha reveals a key mechanism: the value of a viral event lies not in trending itself but in converting a place's dormant resources into affordances the public can perceive (Zheng & Luo, 2026). Jimei's media practice confirms this judgment. From the causeway sunset to the stamp-collecting game of the Fortune Horses, the production of visibility follows the same grammar: retelling the place in photographable, participatory, and shareable ways. But media logic has an intrinsic trap: algorithms prefer novelty and spectacle, and once local narrative is taken over by traffic logic, it easily slides toward exaggeration and hollowness. Jimei's sense of proportion lies in the fact that media narration remains anchored in real everyday life—the School Village is still the School Village and the sea wall still the sea wall; what media does is translation, not fabrication.

Jimei also possesses an underestimated media asset: the scenic-ization of transport itself. The sea-crossing segment of Metro Line 1 is a commuting facility that became an object of photography because it passes over



the sea; the phrase “metro on the sea” itself became a communicative symbol. This suggests that the production of visibility does not necessarily depend on new investment: a district’s existing infrastructure, everyday scenes, and skyline may all be reactivated by a change in the way of seeing. For districts with limited fiscal resources, rather than spending heavily on new landmarks, it is better first to take stock of how much unseen inventory they already own.

4.2 Emotional Logic: From Watching to Healing

The deep driver of new scenes is the matching of emotional supply and demand. Research on destination immersion shows that a destination’s fascinating qualities and genuine resident–tourist interaction can significantly raise tourists’ immersion, which in turn converts into satisfaction and intention to revisit (Li et al., 2025). Slow-travel research pushes this judgment further: contemporary consumers’ travel motives are shifting from check-in curiosity toward healing dwelling, with epistemic value and emotional value replacing price as the core sources of perceived value (Chen, Cai, et al., 2026). Measured by this yardstick, Jimei—the relaxation of the School Village, the causeway sunset, the evening breeze over Xinglin Bay—provides precisely a low-intensity, sustainable emotional supply. This supply is not stimulating, but it endures. Enduring emotional value cannot be manufactured by one-time visual spectacle; it requires scenes to preserve genuine warmth and appropriate blank space.

In terms of psychological mechanism, the emotional supply of Jimei’s scenes can be divided into two layers. The surface layer is immediate pleasure: the brilliance of the sunset, the bustle of markets, and the thrill of performances all belong to this layer. The deep layer is sustained settling: the sound of reading in the School Village, the evening breeze over the bay, and the everyday vitality of old streets soothe the fatigue of urban youth ground down by efficiency. Surface pleasure is easy to manufacture and easy to tire of; deep settling is hard to replicate and hardest to replace. Scene operators who fixate only on the former will exhaust their budgets in round after round of sensory escalation; only by holding to the latter can scenes become standing institutions of people’s spiritual lives.

4.3 Place Logic: The Reproduction of Place-ness

Without the anchoring of place-ness, a scene is merely a replicable commercial module. Research on the tourism reuse of industrial heritage demonstrates a feasible path: the construction of new symbols can infuse old spaces with the characteristics of the times; place-ness is not a preserved specimen but a relationship continually reproduced in use (Yue & Li, 2026). Jimei is richly endowed with place-ness resources—the Kah-kee spirit, Southern Fujian culture, the School Village’s scholarly lineage, and a maritime temperament layered upon one another. The key to building new scenes is to let these elements enter the language system of contemporary consumption rather than sealing them away on interpretive plaques. The value of the Fortune Horses experiment lies exactly here: Southern Fujian blessings are translated into installations and games, and place-ness enters young people’s lenses in a light-footed way. The opposite of place-ness has never been modernity, but the unrecognizable generic template.

The contemporary translation of Southern Fujian culture is another fertile field awaiting deep cultivation in Jimei. Intangible cultural heritage such as Gezai opera, lotus-leaf rap, and Gaojia opera still survives in Jimei’s streets; during the National Day holiday of 2025, the Southern Fujian Culture Carnival had villagers

hawking tusun jelly and radish cakes in the Southern Fujian dialect, placing Gezai singing and Western instruments on the same stage. The value of such practice lies not in the polish of the performance but in the personal presence of the culture's holders. Once place-ness is narrated by local people, it naturally carries a texture that no outsider can forge. If scene-building can include more such presence, what tourists receive is not a packaged place but a living one.

4.4 Governance Logic: From Builder to Operator

The other half of the Jimei experience is written in the transformation of the government's role. Issuing nearly 4 million yuan in consumption vouchers, opening some 6,600 on-street parking spaces free of charge, and designing the Fortune Horses event and citywalk routes—these moves share a common direction: the government's transformation from a builder of scenic areas into an operator of scenes. Case studies of internet-famous cities have long pointed out that whether a contingent viral event can be institutionalized into a sustainable local development model determines a destination's probability of moving from internet fame to enduring appeal (Zheng & Luo, 2026). By linking check-ins, lotteries, and repeat consumption into a closed loop, Jimei has become a micro-sample of the institutionalization of traffic. Building relies on investment; operating relies on patience; the refinement of governance will ultimately be proportional to a scene's lifespan.

The operator role poses entirely new capability requirements for government. Jimei's stated goal—a theme every season, a feature every month, an event every week—essentially treats the district as a continuously updated content product. This requires government departments to understand both the rhythm of communication and the logic of commerce, while holding local culture in respect. Judging from the execution details of the Fortune Horses event, interdepartmental linkage among Jimei's culture-tourism, commerce, and trade-union departments has begun to take shape. Of course, the boundaries of operation also require vigilance: the government sets the stage without stealing the show, leaving the stage to market actors and local residents, so that scenes do not degenerate into self-congratulatory image projects.

5 Four Concerns Behind the Prosperity

Jimei's achievements are plain to see; its latent worries deserve plain speaking. The sincerity of speculative research lies not in singing praises but in laying the structural problems behind prosperity on the table. Of the four concerns below, some have already shown signs in Jimei and others remain latent, but none is unique to Jimei—they are examinations that every district relying on new scenes for a breakthrough will sooner or later face.

5.1 The Tides of Traffic and the Anxiety of Retention

Traffic is inherently tidal. During the 2025 National Day–Mid-Autumn Festival holiday, Jimei received 1.978 million tourist visits and recorded tourism revenue of 1.298 billion yuan—gratifying results, but the holiday peak also throws the weekday shortfall into relief. The forty-year evolution of destination research reminds us that traffic logic can quickly make a destination and can just as quickly move elsewhere (Chen, Zhao, & Liu, 2026). The essence of retention is relationships, and relationships cannot be formed overnight. If assessment indicators revolve around visits and revenue, grassroots actors will naturally incline toward



chasing the next blockbuster rather than deepening existing relationships. The guests still willing to stay after the tide recedes are a scene's true asset.

The response to the tides lies not in pushing the peaks higher but in filling the valleys fuller. On ordinary days, what Jimei truly relies on is the everyday consumption of local residents and young students and the steady arrival of study-tour groups and visitors from neighboring cities. Over-concentrating resources on holiday blockbuster-making instead neglects the maintenance of weekday scenes. A district's cultural and tourism resilience is always reflected in the popularity of an ordinary weekend, not in the clamor of a golden week.

5.2 Scene Homogenization and the Dilution of Authenticity

The industry-wide risk of new scenes is self-replication. One sunset goes viral, and sunset camps appear everywhere; one market format works, and identical stalls spread across the country. Media logic rewards imitation, and place-ness is diluted in the imitation. The reconstruction of place attachment by social media is not without cost: when tourists arrive with templated imaginings, the place's true texture may instead be obscured (Shi et al., 2025). Jimei's distinctiveness today comes from the unique superposition of School Village and sea wall; if scenes are allowed to slide toward generic templates, that distinctiveness will be slowly ground away. Once authenticity is diluted, even the most ingenious marketing can only produce one-time consumption.

5.3 Host–Guest Dislocation and the Cession of the Everyday

Host–guest sharing is the ideal form of new scenes, but the tension in practice is real. Citywalk research has long noted that the rise of mediatized districts is often accompanied by the cession of local life, as original residents retreat from masters of the scene to its background (Wang et al., 2025). The Jimei School Village currently maintains a healthy state of host–guest coexistence, but the continued expansion of visitor scale will eventually test this balance. Noise near dormitory areas, rising prices in small shops, and crowding on public lawns are all foreseeable frictions. Once the host–guest relationship loses balance, the scene's most moving everydayness will quietly drain away, leaving only an exquisite shell.

5.4 Emotional Overdraft and the Shallowness of Meaning

Emotional value is the hottest word in current cultural and tourism narrative—and the most easily abused. Once healing is industrially mass-produced, it degenerates into a new formula. Slow-travel research's emphasis on value-driven strategies was intended to return travel to a whole-person concern, not to turn the sense of relaxation into a priced fast-moving consumer good (Chen, Cai, et al., 2026). Jimei's scenes still retain a sincere temperament, but the industry at large is saturated with a tendency toward emotional fast food. When every scene is selling cure, cure itself depreciates. Holding the depth of meaning is harder—and more important—than chasing the heat of emotion.

The shallowness of meaning often appears in exquisite forms. When blessing becomes wish-tags on an assembly line, when nostalgia becomes standardized retro set-dressing, and when healing becomes nap pods billed by the hour, emotion is emptied of its real core and only a sellable shape remains. Consumers' discernment grows: those willing to pay for atmosphere today will tomorrow ask about the substance behind the

atmosphere. The depth of a scene's meaning is, in the end, the degree of respect shown to consumers.

6 Governance Recommendations for Enduring Appeal

Based on the above analysis, this article offers four recommendations for Jimei and similar districts. They are interrelated and jointly point to a shift from traffic-thinking to relationship-thinking.

First, from building scenes to cultivating scenes. A scene is an organism, not a structure; it needs sustained care, adjustment, and renewal. Jimei is advised to establish a scene life-cycle management system, exercising restraint toward spontaneously grown scenes such as the Ten-Mile Causeway—less hardened renovation, more elastic blank space—so that the place retains room to keep growing. Experience with the place-ness reconstruction of industrial heritage shows that only when the implantation of new symbols respects the existing texture of place can the ending of a thousand scenes with one face be avoided (Yue & Li, 2026). The essence of cultivating scenes is to shift budgets from one-time construction toward long-term content renewal and community cultivation.

Second, from consumption vouchers to consumption relationships. Consumption vouchers can leverage short-term footfall but cannot automatically convert into long-term relationships. The focus of fiscal instruments should shift from subsidizing single acts of consumption toward cultivating host–guest connections—supporting small shops, communities, and young creators as resident producers of scenes. Research on destination immersion reveals a plain but profound truth: genuine interaction between tourists and residents is the most reliable source of immersion and intention to revisit (Li et al., 2025). Jimei sits upon a force of 150,000 teachers and students; if this young cohort is mobilized as co-creators of scenes, its creativity is beyond the reach of any outsourced planning firm.

Third, from traffic indicators to meaning indicators. Beyond visits and revenue, Jimei is advised to build a scene evaluation system covering length of stay, intention to revisit, resident satisfaction, and cultural identity. Policy evaluation of night-time clusters has already proven that scientific effect measurement can help government see a policy's true efficacy (Zheng, He, et al., 2026). When the yardstick of evaluation changes, grassroots behavior follows. Once staying and returning are included in assessment, operators will naturally turn from chasing blockbusters to cultivating repeat customers.

Fourth, from single-point virality to scene clusters. Jimei's family fortune is the superposition of three scene types—school village, coastline, and new town. Citywalk routes, study-tour courses, and night-time performances should serve as bonds that promote the mutual feeding of footfall and the mutual verification of meaning among the three, so that no hotspot fights alone. Research on the online influence of urban leisure districts suggests that format innovation and product portfolios are the structural support of a district's enduring appeal (Wang et al., 2025). The point of a cluster is risk dispersion: the ebbing of one scene will not drag down a whole district's cultural and tourism fundamentals.

7 Conclusion

Returning to the opening question: by what means can new cultural and tourism consumption scenes en-



ture? The answer offered by the Jimei sample is not abstruse. Traffic is a victory of visibility; retention is a victory of relationality. A scene's true asset is neither installations nor trending topics but the repeatedly confirmed emotional bonds between people and place. The everydayness of the School Village, the causeway sunset, and the night colors of the new town move people precisely because they were not made into bonsai but grew in the soil of life. For districts anxious to break out of the circle, Jimei's lesson may be compressed into a plain phrase: build fewer bonsai, cultivate more ecosystems. Scenes age; relationships renew. In the second half of cultural and tourism consumption, the contest is not over whose scene is more dazzling but over whose place is more worth returning to. Furthermore, the theoretical task of new-scene research is to restore "scene" from a marketing word to an analytical concept for understanding people-place relationships. What this article has done, taking Jimei as an example, is only the beginning of that work. More systematic empirical research, longer-term tracking observation, and cross-district comparative analysis all await those who follow.

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