

Research on the Development of Red Study Travel Products in the Western Frontier Reclamation Area

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Abstract: This project delves into the red cultural and tourism resources of the Western Frontier Reclamation Area, as well as their current development status, exploring optimization strategies for red study tours. Using RMP theory, it identifies and categorizes red cultural resources (R), evaluates their value, and identifies core customer groups and market demands through questionnaires and online reviews (M). It then analyzes the external environment and development opportunities to provide a basis for product design (P). Based on RMP analysis, representative red tourism resources are selected to design thematic products, which are validated for feasibility and appeal through visitor satisfaction surveys. Finally, drawing on successful domestic cases, it proposes optimization strategies from two aspects: enhancing product development quality and creating a friendly destination.

Keywords: RMP; Red study; Product development; Western Frontier Reclamation Area

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1. Basic concepts

1.1. Red study travel

Red study travel resources refer to tourism activities that take red memorial sites, relics, and the spirits they carry as attractions. They organize and receive tourists for visits, enabling them to learn red historical knowledge, receive education on red revolutionary traditions, inspire spirits, relax, and enrich experiences. It is a new type of thematic tourism that combines red humanistic landscapes with green natural landscapes, and integrates red traditional education with the promotion of tourism industry development. Red study travel resources not only have rich historical and cultural value but also can inherit and carry forward the red spirit through tourism activities, enhancing national identity and pride. By visiting red historical sites, people can deeply understand China's red history and stimulate patriotic enthusiasm and national pride. In addition, red study travel can drive the development of related industries and promote the economic and social development of the local area^[1].

As an emerging tourism format, study travel, especially red study travel, shows great market potential and development value in areas rich in red tourism resources such as the western border reclamation areas^[2]. It not only carries profound historical culture, but also plays a key role in spiritual civilization and ideological and political education. With

its unique military reclamation culture and abundant red relics, the western border reclamation areas provide favorable conditions for red study travel. Combining tourism and education, red study travel products have broad prospects.

1.2. The spirit of defending the border and reclaiming wasteland

The spirit of defending the border and reclaiming wasteland includes hard work for entrepreneurship, selfless dedication for rooting down, innovative development, ecological and green border protection, and pioneering innovation. It is a powerful spiritual driving force that inspires people in the western border reclamation areas to move forward ^[3]. It is also an important part of the Chinese national spirit, playing an irreplaceable role in promoting economic development and social stability in the western border reclamation areas.

2. RMP analysis of red study travel in the western border reclamation areas

Based on the RMP (Ange) theory proposed by tourism scholar Wu, R (Resource) refers to the evaluation and analysis of the types of resources owned by a tourist destination. M (Market) represents the market, involving the segmentation, selection, and positioning analysis of the tourist destination's market. P (Product) stands for product, referring to the analysis of the product strategies adopted by the tourist destination ^[4]. In the RMP theory, R is the foundation of development, M determines the direction of demand, and P is the bridge connecting the two. Only when the three are matched and coordinated can the optimal effect and sustainable development of tourism development be achieved.

2.1. R analysis

The western border reclamation areas are rich in red tourism resources, covering both material and intangible forms. Material resources intuitively show the development track of the reclamation areas. For example, memorial halls display a large number of precious cultural relics, pictures, and materials, vividly presenting the arduous course of border garrison, reclamation, and defense ^[5]. The history museums of each regiment detail the development and changes of different regimental farms, carrying people's memories. Heritage parks preserve important sites from the early stage of border reclamation and construction, serving as strong witnesses to history. Intangible resources contain profound spiritual connotations, with the "Spirit of Border Reclamation" as the core. It includes spiritual qualities such as hard work for entrepreneurship, selfless dedication for rooting down, and innovative development, inspiring generations of border reclamation workers. In addition, there are films, television works, literary works, and biographies reflecting border reclamation life, showing the spiritual outlook of border reclamation workers from different perspectives.

In the process of utilizing red tourism resources in the western border reclamation areas, many practical problems remain, whereby planning and integration of resources lack systematicness, some venues have outdated and single display forms with insufficient interactive experiences; the excavation of red cultural connotations is not in-depth, the promotion methods are traditional, the brand influence is limited, and the appeal to young people is weak ^[6]. Furthermore, the integration with local ethnic characteristics, natural ecology and other resources is not high, supporting facilities are incomplete, and the driving effect on the regional economy has not been fully realized; the level of capital operation is low, capital investment is concentrated in traditional fields, and policy and financial support need to be strengthened; at the same time, there are problems such as talent shortage and inconvenient transportation due to the remote location of some scenic spots, which restrict the further development of red tourism ^[7].

2.2. M analysis

Through the analysis of the red study travel market in the western border reclamation areas, a questionnaire survey was conducted on core customer groups, tourist needs, and satisfaction. The survey shows that young students (accounting for about 60%) and parent-child families (accounting for about 25%) are the main target markets. Most tourists obtain relevant information through social media (accounting for about 40%), travel agency recommendations (accounting for about 30%),

and friend/family recommendations (accounting for about 20%), mainly from local and surrounding cities (accounting for about 70%). Tourists have high demands for educational value and experience, but the current product forms are single and lack innovation^[8]. About 70% of the respondents prefer interactive experience activities, and their satisfaction with service quality and facilities is average. The red study travel market in the western border reclamation areas has great potential. With the increasing emphasis on red education and the improvement of transportation infrastructure, its regional appeal will be further enhanced.

To tap market potential, it is recommended to strengthen product innovation and increase interactive experience projects; improve service quality by enhancing tour guide training and upgrading scenic spot facilities; increase publicity and promotion efforts, make full use of social media and cooperate with travel agencies to attract more tourists from other regions; improve infrastructure, such as optimizing transportation conditions and clarifying scenic spot signs.

Young students are in a critical period of values formation. They participate in red study travel to learn red history through on-site experience, cultivate patriotic feelings and social responsibility. They pursue immersive and experiential products to enhance their understanding and memory of history^[9]. Parent-child families choose red study travel not only to let their children be influenced by red culture but also to enhance parent-child relationships and experience border area culture. Therefore, they hope to achieve a balance between education and leisure during the study tour, arranging sessions for learning red culture while setting up leisure activities suitable for parent-child joint participation.

Tourists have high demands for the educational value and experience of red study travel in the western border reclamation areas, but the current product types are relatively single and lack innovation. About 70% of the respondents prefer interactive experience activities, and their satisfaction with service quality and facilities is average. About 50% of the respondents believe that service quality needs to be improved, and about 60% think that infrastructure needs further improvement, including transportation convenience, clarity of scenic spot signs, and parking lot capacity. Future development should focus on product innovation, increase diversified product forms, improve service quality, and optimize infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of different core customer groups, enhance market competitiveness, and promote the high-quality development of red study travel in the western border reclamation areas^[10].

3. P analysis

Red study travel products in the western border reclamation areas mainly include visits to memorial halls, museums, and other venues, where red culture is disseminated through explanations of the border reclamation development process and displays of historical relics and pictures. However, these products have many problems. For example, the form of tourist visits is relatively single, lacking interactive experience sessions, making it difficult to attract the interest of young students. The depth of the explanation content is insufficient, failing to fully explore the contemporary value of the border reclamation spirit, and thus unable to meet the needs of cadres for in-depth learning. In addition, although the “Retracing the Reclamation Road” activity arranged in some study tour routes has certain experiential elements, it lacks professional guidance and safety guarantees, resulting in limited tourist participation^[11]. These issues reflect deficiencies in the innovation, professionalism, interactivity, and safety of red study travel products in the western border reclamation areas, restricting their market appeal and the exertion of educational functions.

Product development has advantages such as rich red cultural resources, policy support, and growing market demand, but it also faces disadvantages including scattered resource distribution, single product forms, backward infrastructure, and low brand awareness, as well as threats such as competition from surrounding areas, tourists’ safety concerns, and pressure for product updates^[12]. To address these challenges, development strategies include:

- (1) Deeply integrate resources to form a “Red + N” model, combining natural landscapes with folk culture to develop characteristic routes;
- (2) Innovate display methods through storytelling, situational design, and high-tech means (such as holographic projections and VR experiences) to enhance tourists’ sense of immersion;

- (3) Improve service quality by strengthening training for employees, perfecting infrastructure, and develop interactive experience projects;
- (4) Establish standards and evaluation mechanisms to standardize product development and operation, promote regular development, and thereby enhance product attractiveness and educational value^[13].

4. Research on the development of red study travel products in the western border reclamation areas

4.1. Technology-enabled red inheritance type

Targeting student groups and red culture enthusiasts, this type of product deeply explores the value of resources such as regiment history museums and red culture museums to develop red culture inheritance-oriented study travel products^[14]. During visits to regiment history museums, in addition to regular explanations by professional guides, arrangements are carefully made for elderly border reclamation workers and their descendants to be present in person. These witnesses recount their own experiences or those of their ancestors during the border reclamation and construction process, sharing unknown touching stories from those hard years, from the difficult adaptation upon first arriving in the border reclamation areas to the perseverance in overcoming numerous obstacles to build their homes. Through these true stories, tourists can more intuitively and profoundly feel the profoundness and greatness of border reclamation history^[15].

Leveraging digital technology, immersive VR experience projects are created. Through meticulously designed virtual scenes, the arduous scenarios of the early stage of border reclamation and entrepreneurship are highly restored. Meanwhile, using multimedia interactive display technology, interactive areas are set up in the museums, where tourists can gain in-depth understanding of detailed information about historical events of border reclamation and access precious historical pictures and videos by touching screens or operating handles, making the visit process more interesting and engaging.

4.2. Firsthand experience of military reclamation: Red practice type

Red experience practice products emphasize tourists' personal participation and in-depth experience, allowing them to perceive the spirit of border reclamation through practice. Tourists are organized to participate in agricultural activities such as farmland reclamation, cotton picking, and livestock breeding. Under the guidance of professionals, they pick up farm tools, learn how to plow, sow, and irrigate, and experience the entire process of crop cultivation. During the cotton-picking season, tourists enter cotton fields to pick cotton with their own hands, feeling the joy of harvest and the hardships of labor. By participating in livestock breeding, taking care of cattle and sheep, and learning breeding knowledge, tourists can personally understand the spirit of self-sufficiency and hard work of border reclamation workers in harsh environments.

The "Retracing the Border Defense Road" activity is carried out, where tourists hike along the patrol routes of the reclamation area people in those years. During the hike, simulated response links to border emergencies are carefully set up, allowing tourists to learn how to deal with emergencies under the guidance of professionals. At the same time, multiple explanation points are set along the way to introduce the historical background, important events, and touching stories of border reclamation workers' border defense efforts, enabling tourists to gain an in-depth understanding of border defense culture while walking.

Military reclamation handicraft making courses are offered, inviting local experienced craftsmen to teach tourists traditional crafts such as adobe making, straw mat weaving, and the production of military reclamation characteristic handicrafts. In the learning process, tourists not only master a craft but also deeply appreciate the qualities of resourcefulness and diligence of military reclamation predecessors who made use of local materials, inheriting military reclamation culture through practice. After the course, tourists can take the handicrafts they made as souvenirs, leaving a profound memory.

4.3. Breaking through challenges: Red expansion type

Combining modern outward bound training concepts and making full use of the unique geographical environment of the western border reclamation areas, such as the vast Gobi and endless deserts, professional red inspirational outward bound bases are built. The base designs an outward bound project called “Simulated Border Reclamation Breakthrough”, which simulates various difficult scenarios faced during the construction of border reclamation in those years, with complex obstacles and challenges set up. Tourists participate in the project in groups, needing to closely collaborate, jointly formulate breakthrough strategies, give full play to their respective advantages, and overcome numerous obstacles. Through this project, tourists’ abilities of teamwork, communication, and problem-solving are trained.

The “Material Transportation Relay” activity is carried out, with different transportation tasks and routes set to simulate the arduous process of material transportation during the border reclamation period. In the activity, tourists need to work in groups to carry materials through complex terrains such as deserts and Gobi, overcoming various man-made and natural obstacles. This activity not only tests tourists’ physical strength and willpower but also strengthens team cooperation. During the outward bound training, professional coaches timely explain the history of border reclamation and the spirit of border defense and reclamation, enabling tourists to deeply understand the indomitable and forging ahead spirit of border reclamation workers under harsh conditions, and strengthen their patriotic feelings and the spirit of hard work.

4.4. Amorous charm: Red leisure type

Red leisure integration products are committed to organically combining red culture with local natural scenery and folk culture, providing tourists with diversified tourism experiences. The “Red Culture + Ecological Tourism” route is developed, leading tourists to visit the ecological forests built by border reclamation workers on the edge of deserts. During the visit, professional narrators introduce the achievements of border reclamation in ecological protection, from the arduous process of afforestation to the important role of ecological forests in improving the local environment, allowing tourists to understand the efforts made by border reclamation workers to protect this land. At the same time, tourists can enjoy the unique beauty of desert oases, feel the magic and magnificence of nature, and enhance their awareness of ecological protection while appreciating the scenery.

Thematic activities of “Red Culture and Folk Customs” are held, inviting local people to perform traditional songs and dances, such as Uyghur Twelve Muqam and Kazakh Black Steed Dance, to display the rich and colorful folk culture. Tourists can participate in the production of national traditional handicrafts and personally feel the charm of national culture. At the event site, various characteristic foods are also provided for tourists to taste authentic western border cuisine. Through these activities, tourists can feel the charm of the integration of red culture and diverse national cultures in leisure and entertainment, promoting the exchange and inheritance of various national cultures.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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