

Research on the Design of Regional Cultural and Creative Products That Influence Consumer Purchases Based on Emotional Design Analysis

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With the rapid development of tourism across various regions in China, the country's cultural and creative industries have experienced significant growth. Regional cultural and creative products have emerged as a necessary outcome in response to shifting consumer trends. As living standards continue to improve, consumers' demand for tourism souvenirs has increased, along with a growing preference for personalized products and enhanced spiritual and emotional fulfillment. In recent years, a wide variety of innovative and regionally representative cultural products have appeared on the market. These products exhibit both creativity and cultural symbolism, effectively stimulating consumer desire and promoting regional cultural development. At the same time, they meet the needs of modern consumers and enhance public awareness from an aesthetic perspective. This paper explores how the framework of emotional design can be integrated into the development of regional cultural and creative products. It investigates how successful regional cultural products can stimulate consumer purchasing intent and whether they enhance consumer engagement and experiential satisfaction. Taking museums in Henan Province as a case study, the research examines regional identity, the forms of cultural products, and regional color schemes. This study aims to promote the development of regional cultural products through emotional design, offering valuable insights for enhancing the diversity and richness of regional cultures.

Keywords: emotional design, regional cultural and creative products, museums, local culture

Introduction

Background and Aim

Culture is gradually shaped through everyday life, and due to the inherent differences among various regions, distinct regional cultures have emerged (Wu & Xiao, 2022). The concept of cultural and creative industries was first proposed in 1977 by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (Chen, 2024). During the boom in the development of cultural and creative industries, the uniqueness of regional culture allowed it to stand out. Regional culture integrates local customs, natural landscapes, traditional practices, and humanistic traditions,

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giving it strong regional characteristics. At the same time, it enriches local cultural resources and provides direction for product design. By incorporating local cultural elements into product development, new cultural symbols unique to specific regions can be created, supporting not only the local market but also serving as a new form of cultural dissemination.

As consumers' living standards continue to rise, China's tourism industry has experienced remarkable growth. An increasing number of consumers seek to purchase souvenirs with regional characteristics after traveling. According to statistics, from 2016 to 2021, the market size of China's cultural and creative product industry grew at an average annual rate of 15.57%¹, indicating a growing consumer demand for regional cultural products. Compared with traditional products, regional cultural and creative products place greater emphasis on the added value of regional culture. This added value offers unique emotional resonance for consumers, allowing such products to fulfill a deeper, spiritual need associated with the memory of travel. This emotional connection constitutes a key distinction between regional cultural products and other types of goods. Consequently, the increasing number of consumers has driven the continued expansion of the regional cultural product market.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of regional cultural products on consumers through the lens of emotional design, using the cultural and creative products of the Henan Museum in China as a case study. As one of the oldest provinces in Chinese history, Henan possesses a profound cultural heritage. Its museums, which serve as repositories for cultural relics from across the province, offer a rich collection of artifacts that provide a strong foundation for the development of high-quality regional cultural products. The emerging growth of Henan's tourism industry has further driven the advancement of cultural and creative products at various tourist sites. Drawing inspiration from the unique characteristics of its museums, the Henan Museum has developed a wide range of culturally rich products that reflect the region's identity, contributing to the broader development of regional cultural creativity.

Regional Culture

Cultural and creative products are commodities that integrate cultural elements and creative transformation to possess both functional and market value (Chen, 2024). For example, Figure 1 shows a jade ornament featuring a human head and snake body, unearthed in 1983 from an ancient tomb near Baoxiang Temple in Guangshan County, Xinyang City, Henan Province, and now housed in the Henan Museum. Drawing inspiration from this unique artifact, designers created a jade pendant lollipop (Figure 2) as a cultural and creative product for the museum. Centered around the regional cultural characteristics of the Henan Museum, this product reflects a design that is uniquely tied to the institution. These exclusive artifacts represent the regional culture of the Henan Museum and carry irreplaceable, non-replicable, and non-renewable cultural significance. As a result, the cultural and creative products developed from them possess distinctiveness and originality.

¹ https://www.sohu.com/a/565501457_121114988.



Figure 1. Human Head and Snake Body Jade Ornament (a jade artifact from Henan Provincial Museum).



Figure 2. Human Head and Snake Body Jade Decorative Cultural and Creative Lollipop (Jade Cultural Relics of Henan Provincial Museum).

Emotional Design

In contemporary society, increasing attention is being paid to emotional needs in daily life, prompting designers to incorporate emotional elements into their work. In 2002, American cognitive psychologist Donald Norman introduced the concept of emotional design. He categorized product attributes into three fundamental levels: visceral, behavioral, and reflective, arranged from the most basic to the most advanced (Norman, 2004). According to Norman, pleasure arises at the intersection of these three levels within the framework of emotional design.

Visceral Design

Visceral design is triggered by initial sensory experiences; it's about how appearance and nature affect people (Dybvik, 2022). A product's first impression significantly influences the consumer's mood and willingness to further explore its deeper functions. Visceral design encompasses the consumer's immediate awareness, initial attraction to the product, and overall emotional response. In other words, when a product presents an aesthetically appealing image, it is more likely to stimulate consumer desire and drive purchasing

behavior. As the most intuitive layer of emotional design, the visceral aspect of cultural and creative products is primarily conveyed through visual perception. Gaining consumer approval through the product's appearance becomes a crucial first step. This study analyzes the visual elements of successful cultural and creative products from the Henan Museum, examining aspects such as color, patterns, materials, and imagery to identify the key components of effective visceral design.

Behavioral Design

Behavioral design is about the look and feel of the product, the overall experience of using the product (Norman, 2005). It encompasses the consumer's reactions and the process of obtaining information through interaction with the product—what is commonly referred to as usability. From an emotional perspective, when consumers have experiences that meet or exceed their expectations, they derive pleasure and satisfaction from the product's usability. In the context of regional cultural and creative products, many items share similar functions, making the diversification of product forms and modes of interaction increasingly important. The ability of a product to offer a differentiated interactive experience—distinct from other cultural products—has become a key factor in consumer engagement. Therefore, this study analyzes the formal diversity of regional cultural and creative products and examines the varying consumer motivations behind their interaction with such products.

Reflective Design

Reflective responses refer to the consumer's feelings and thoughts after being immersed in an experience; it's about product motivation, rationalization, and intelligence (Dybvik, 2022). Consumers tend to remember the emotional impact a product has made on them, and this reflection plays a crucial role in their decision to make a purchase. Reflective design is strongly influenced by the consumer's post-visit experience; at the same time, the level of reflection is influenced by experience and culture, as well as by one's social group and fashion (Norman, 2003), and purchasing motivations vary among individuals based on how they interpret and internalize that experience. In this context, cultural and creative products place greater emphasis on conveying cultural meaning and intrinsic value. This study focuses on the reflective dimension from a cultural perspective, exploring the deeper significance behind the success of the Henan Museum's cultural and creative products—particularly the stories and historical narratives attached to the artifacts that inspire these products.

Emotional design represents a higher-level objective in the design process. Designers must first understand the logic and context of a product through comprehensive analysis in order to create effective emotionally-driven designs. For regional cultural and creative products, emotional design enhances the overall product experience and improves consumer satisfaction. Among the vast array of cultural products on the market, those that incorporate emotional design are more likely to stimulate consumers' purchasing intentions. Emotional design is closely connected to various aspects of visual design in cultural products, including packaging, product form, and brand identity. Well-executed regional cultural products that embody emotional design principles can not only meet consumer needs but also, in many cases, help alleviate negative emotions.

Methods

This study focuses on the cultural and creative products of the Henan Museum, examining them through the lens of emotional design theory. It analyzes the key emotional design elements present in the museum's most successful products. By integrating principles of emotional design, designers can create products that are not only

functionally effective but also capable of evoking emotional resonance, thereby offering consumers a more meaningful and enhanced experience.

- Visceral: Visually observe the appearance of the design and the feeling it brings to the consumer. The aim is to elicit an immediate positive response.
- Behavioral: Whether the usability of the design can form interactive experience with consumers and improve consumer satisfaction.
- Reflective: Through the value and story of the product itself, consumers are encouraged to think about design and establish a deeper connection.

Table 1



Emotional Design Three-Layer Model

Visceral	Behavioral	Reflective
Visual attraction	Availability	Significance
Priority effect	Functionality	Influence
Likability	Property	Cross inductance
Latent impression	Efficiency	Value

Visceral design will be analyzed through the visual elements of color, patterns, materials, and imagery in the outstanding regional cultural and creative products of Henan Province. The Tang Sancai figurine, a representative artifact of China's Tang Dynasty, serves as a prototype. Unlike the traditional realism of Tang Sancai, the redesigned cultural product presents the animals in a cute and playful manner, adding a sense of liveliness to the historical imagery. The product retains the original Tang Sancai color palette and employs traditional production techniques, enabling consumers to associate the product directly with the historical artifact. This visual novelty creates a striking first impression and has garnered widespread popularity among younger consumers (Table 2). The chubby little horse figure not only serves as an engaging vehicle for cultural promotion but also helps the museum attract greater public attention.

Table 2

Cultural and creative products 1

Product		
Color	Cultural relics of the Tang three-color color	
Pattern		
Image	Tri-coloured glazed pottery of the Tang Dynasty	
Effect	Saving pot	



To enhance visitor convenience during museum tours, the Henan Museum’s cultural and creative bottled water has become one of the most popular products among consumers. The design features a sports cap, allowing users to easily stay hydrated while exploring the museum. Additionally, the spill-proof cap ensures that the bottle can be used during physical activity without the risk of leakage. While maintaining the core functionality and performance of a water bottle, this design significantly improves the product’s usability and efficiency as a cultural and creative item (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Cultural and creative products 2.

As shown in Table 3, this cultural and creative product is inspired by the ancient artifact Zhuyan Mirror. The museum has reimagined the artifact as a product suited to modern consumer needs, using the elegance of the original object to enhance the visual value of the design. By leveraging the historical narrative and cultural significance of the artifact, the product fosters a sense of interaction between the museum and its visitors. This re-creation, which aligns with contemporary aesthetic preferences, bridges the gap between cultural heritage and the consumer. The product’s visually appealing design captures attention, while the strong contrast between the colors of the original artifact and the cultural product enhances the consumer’s initial impression.

Table 3
Cultural and creative products 3

Product		
Color	The use of light colors with low saturation makes the overall product look fresh and can attract the favor of young consumers	
Pattern		
Image	Based on a ZhuYan mirror	
Effect	Pocket mirror	

Psychologist Kurt Lewin proposed that human behavior is shaped by the interaction between individuals and their surrounding environment (Lewin, 1947). This concept is particularly relevant to museum cultural and creative products. Most museums are designed with a visitor flow that places the gift shop or souvenir area near the exit. After an immersive and emotionally engaging visit, this spatial arrangement maximizes the emotional response of consumers. For museums—spaces rich in cultural heritage—products inherently carry elements of reflective design to some extent.

Emotional design plays a crucial role in museum cultural and creative products. Well-designed products can enhance the overall museum experience, deepen the connection between visitors and the institution, and evoke reflection and imagination. In some cases, they may even motivate first-time visits or encourage repeat visits.

Conclusion

This study focuses on the cultural and creative peripheral products of the Henan Museum and, based on the theoretical framework of emotional design, explores the key psychological factors that influence consumer purchasing intentions toward regional cultural products. Through an analysis of the three levels of emotional design—visceral, behavioral, and reflective—the study demonstrates that successful regional cultural products must not only possess strong visual appeal but also provide a satisfying functional experience and effectively communicate deeper cultural meaning.

The findings reveal that the Henan Museum's cultural products draw upon the distinctive characteristics of regional culture by reinterpreting and innovating upon traditional artifacts from the museum's collection. These products not only preserve and extend the value of historical culture but also align with the aesthetic preferences and practical needs of contemporary consumers. Particularly within the immersive environment of the museum, when visitors' emotional responses to cultural artifacts are at their peak, the introduction of well-designed cultural products can significantly stimulate purchasing desire and foster a sense of regional cultural identity.

In conclusion, emotional design enhances both the appeal and market competitiveness of regional cultural products, while also providing a new direction for the dissemination of regional culture. In the future, the development of regional cultural and creative products can continue to follow the principles of emotional design—meeting consumers' emotional needs while deeply exploring regional cultural resources—to effectively convey cultural value and promote the growth of the cultural and creative industries.

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