

# Analysis on the Integration of Culture, Commerce, Tourism, and Sports in Hainan to Help Build Haikou Into an International Consumption Center City

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Abstract: In the context of the Hainan Free Trade Port, Haikou is committed to becoming an international consumer city, with the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports as a key strategy. This article provides an in-depth analysis of Haikou's current status in building an international consumer city through the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, including its strengths and existing challenges. It explores the significance of this integration for Haikou and proposes targeted development strategies. These strategies aim to enhance the city's appeal and international competitiveness by integrating resources, innovating business models, and optimizing the environment, thereby promoting the deep integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports in Haikou.

**Keywords:** Integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports; Haikou; International consumer city center; Development strategy

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### 1. Introduction

With the advancement of economic globalization and consumption upgrades, international consumer cities, as hubs for global consumption resources and leaders in consumer trends, play a crucial role in regional and global economic development. Haikou, the core leading area of the Hainan Free Trade Port, boasts unique policy advantages, abundant natural resources, and a rich cultural heritage, making it highly potential for developing into an international consumer city<sup>[1,2]</sup>.

The integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports is a significant trend in the development of urban economies today. By integrating resources from these sectors, it can create diverse consumption scenarios, meet the increasingly varied consumer demands, and thus promote the prosperity and upgrading of the urban consumer market <sup>[3]</sup>. For Haikou, actively promoting the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports not only helps to fully leverage its own advantages and enhance the city's overall competitiveness but also better supports the

strategic goal of building the Hainan Free Trade Port, achieving high-quality economic development. Therefore, in-depth research on how the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports in Hainan can assist Haikou in building an international consumer center city holds important theoretical and practical significance <sup>[4]</sup>.

# 2. The significance of the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports to the construction of Haikou International Consumption Center City

### 2.1. Enrich consumption scenarios and meet diversified needs

In the context of consumption upgrade, consumer demands are becoming increasingly diverse and personalized <sup>[5, 6]</sup>. The integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports can organically combine cultural depth, commercial vibrancy, tourism experiences, and sports enthusiasm, creating a wide range of consumption scenarios. For instance, in Haikou's Qilou Old Street, by introducing cultural and creative product stores, specialty restaurants, and folk performances, the ancient Qilou buildings are combined with modern commerce and cultural experiences. Tourists can not only admire unique architectural styles but also enjoy local cuisine, purchase souvenirs, and experience folk culture, meeting their needs for cultural experiences, shopping, and leisure activities. Additionally, during marathon events, combining sports events with tourism routes attracts many running enthusiasts and tourists to participate in and watch the races, while also boosting local accommodation, dining, and shopping, offering consumers a new consumption experience <sup>[7]</sup>.

## 2.2. Enhance the city's brand image and enhance its attractiveness

Culture is the soul of a city, commerce its vitality, tourism its calling card, and sports its passion <sup>[8]</sup>. The integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports can fully showcase a city's unique features and charm, enhancing its brand image. Haikou, positioned as a New Year's Eve City and an International Performing Arts Capital, has hosted a series of major events, including the Hunan TV Mango TV New Year's Eve Gala and Kanye West's world tour listening sessions <sup>[8]</sup>. These events have attracted global attention, not only boosting the city's reputation but also showcasing Haikou's open, fashionable, and vibrant image to the world <sup>[9]</sup>. These activities have attracted a large number of tourists and consumers, enhancing the city's appeal and influence, making Haikou more competitive in the international consumer market <sup>[10]</sup>.

### 2.3. Promote coordinated industrial development and promote economic growth

The cultural, commercial, tourism, and sports industries are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The cultural industry provides rich content and creativity for commerce, tourism, and sports. Commerce provides the material foundation and consumer support for culture, tourism, and sports. Tourism expands market opportunities for culture, commerce, and sports. Sports infuse vitality and passion into culture, commerce, and tourism. Through integrated development, these industries can collaborate more effectively, forming a complete industrial chain that drives industrial upgrading and economic growth <sup>[11, 12]</sup>. For example, the China International Consumer Goods Expo (CIGE) not only boosts the development of the trade sector but also promotes the coordinated development of related industries such as tourism, exhibitions, and cultural creativity, injecting strong momentum into Haikou's economic growth. According to statistics, during the CIGE, Haikou saw significant increases in tourism revenue, hotel occupancy rates, and catering sales, significantly boosting the local economy <sup>[13]</sup>.

#### 2.4. Stimulate the growth of consumption and promote the return of overseas consumption

As the duty-free policy for Hainan's islands continues to improve and the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports advances, Haikou's appeal as a consumer destination is growing <sup>[14]</sup>. The city's rich tourism resources, high-quality commercial services, unique cultural experiences, and exciting sports events attract a large number of domestic and international tourists. Duty-free shopping, a hallmark of Hainan's tourism consumption, has become a significant driver of Haikou's consumer growth. In 2024, customs supervised a total of 30.94 billion yuan in Hainan's duty-free shopping, with 56.83 million shoppers <sup>[15]</sup>. The integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports has extended the consumption chain for tourists, increasing both the frequency and amount of spending. Additionally, Haikou has enhanced its consumer environment and service quality, attracting more overseas consumers to return, turning policy benefits into real consumer vitality, and laying a solid foundation for the development of an international consumer center city <sup>[16]</sup>.

# **3.** Analysis of the current situation of integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports in Haikou

### **3.1.** The foundation and advantages of integrated development

Policy support has provided strong backing for the integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports in Haikou, thanks to the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port. The policy framework, featuring zero tariffs, low tax rates, and a simplified tax system, has attracted numerous international consumer brands, duty-free industry capital, and high-net-worth consumers <sup>[17]</sup>. The duty-free policy for departing passengers has been continuously refined, with new methods such as guarantee-based pickup and instant purchase and instant pickup introduced. These changes have increased the shopping quota and expanded the range of products, significantly boosting the consumer market. Additionally, the government has implemented a series of policies to promote the integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, including encouraging large-scale cultural performances and sports events, supporting the growth of the cultural and creative industries, and enhancing the quality and upgrading of tourist attractions, thus creating a favorable policy environment for integrated development <sup>[18]</sup>.

Haikou boasts a rich array of cultural resources, including the Nanyang culture of its old arcade streets, intangible cultural heritage such as Qiong Opera, and Dongpo culture, which provide a deep cultural foundation for the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports <sup>[19]</sup>. In terms of tourism resources, Haikou features a beautiful coastline, tropical landscapes, and volcanic crater geological parks, as well as cultural sites like the former residence of Hai Rui and the Wugong Temple, making it a highly attractive tourist destination. The commercial resources are continuously expanding, with the establishment of large commercial complexes such as Haikou International Duty-Free City, which have attracted many international brands, enhancing the city's international commercial appeal. Additionally, Haikou has venues and facilities suitable for hosting various sports events, providing a solid foundation for the development of the sports industry <sup>[20]</sup>.

As people's living standards improve and their consumption concepts evolve, the demand for cultural, tourism, and sports activities is on the rise. Haikou, a popular tourist destination, welcomes a large number of visitors each year, providing a vast market for the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports. Moreover, local residents purchasing power is growing, leading to a strong demand for high-quality and diverse products and services, which further promotes the integration of these sectors.

# **3.2.** Practice and achievements of integrated development

# 3.2.1. "Culture + Tourism"

Haikou is actively tapping into its local cultural resources, integrating cultural elements into tourism products and routes. For instance, by leveraging the historic arcade streets, it has developed a cultural tourism district where visitors can admire the arcade architecture, savor Hainan's distinctive cuisine, purchase creative cultural products, and immerse themselves in Haikou's rich historical and cultural heritage. The city hosts the Dongpo Cultural Tourism Conference, which promotes Dongpo culture through exhibitions, performances, and forums, attracting many tourists to experience the Dongpo cultural journey. Additionally, Haikou has introduced unique tourism products such as Qiong Opera cultural experience tours and intangible cultural heritage study tours, enriching the cultural depth of its tourism offerings.

### 3.2.2. "Tourism + Business"

Haikou is actively promoting the integration of tourism and commerce, creating a series of tourism shopping districts and commercial complexes. Haikou International Duty-Free City has become the world's largest single duty-free store, attracting a large number of tourists to shop by showcasing many international top brands. Additionally, several distinctive commercial districts have been developed around scenic spots and in bustling urban areas, such as the Century Cape Commercial District and the Gaoxingli Characteristic Commercial Cultural District. These districts integrate shopping, dining, and entertainment with tourism, offering visitors a convenient and enjoyable shopping experience. By bundling tourism with duty-free shopping, Haikou has extended tourists' stays and increased tourism revenue.

### 3.2.3. "Sports + Tourism"

Haikou is leveraging sailing and marathon events to vigorously develop the sports + tourism industry. It hosts a variety of international and domestic events, including the World Beach Volleyball Professional Tour Challenge, the International Water Ski Federation Asian Wakeboarding Series, and the Haikou Marathon, attracting many sports enthusiasts and tourists. Additionally, Haikou has introduced marine sports tourism activities such as sailing experiences, diving, and sea fishing, as well as land-based sports tourism activities like cycling and hiking. By integrating sports activities with tourism, sightseeing, and leisure vacations, Haikou has enriched its tourism offerings and enhanced the appeal and participation in tourism.

### 3.2.4. "Culture + Business"

Integrate cultural elements into commercial districts and shopping centers by hosting a variety of cultural activities and exhibitions, thereby enhancing the cultural atmosphere and appeal of these areas. Organize art exhibitions and live demonstrations of craftsmanship in the old arcade streets, allowing visitors to experience the charm of culture while shopping. Set up cultural experience zones in malls, such as workshops for handicrafts, calligraphy, and painting, offering consumers unique shopping experiences. Additionally, launch cultural-themed commercial events, including exhibitions of cultural and creative products and cultural food festivals, to promote the deep integration of culture and commerce.

# **3.3. Existing problems and challenges**

The integration is not deep enough. While Haikou has made some progress in integrating culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, the integration in certain areas remains superficial, lacking depth and innovation. Some

cultural tourism projects merely combine cultural elements with tourist attractions without fully exploring their cultural significance, thus failing to provide visitors with a profound experience. The integration of sports events with tourism is also inadequate, as the tourism boost from these events has not been fully realized. Apart from short-term consumption increases during the event period, the long-term impact on the tourism market is limited.

The synergy among industries is insufficient, with the cooperation mechanisms between culture, commerce, tourism, and sports not yet fully developed, leading to a fragmented approach. There is a lack of effective communication and coordination among departments such as culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, making it difficult to form a cohesive effort in project planning, resource integration, and market promotion. For instance, when organizing large-scale cultural events, there is often a lack of consideration for the integration with tourism and commerce, which limits the events impact and economic benefits. Additionally, the collaboration between upstream and downstream enterprises in the industrial chain is not tight enough, and the value added by the industry needs to be enhanced.

The infrastructure and services in Haikou need improvement. With the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, and the growing number of tourists, Haikou's infrastructure and services are under pressure. Some tourist attractions face significant traffic congestion, lack sufficient parking spaces, and have inadequate public restrooms and other facilities. The quality of tourism services varies widely, and the professional skills and service levels of tour guides and hotel staff need to be enhanced. In terms of international service, the proficiency in foreign languages is insufficient, making it difficult to meet the needs of international tourists. Additionally, the construction and operation of cultural venues and sports facilities require further strengthening to better support integrated development.

### 3.3.1. Talent shortage

The integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports requires versatile talents who are proficient in these fields. Currently, Haikou faces a shortage of such talents, with an underdeveloped talent cultivation system that fails to meet the industry's rapid growth needs. University programs are not closely aligned with market demands, resulting in graduates lacking practical and innovative skills. Additionally, the attractiveness of talent attraction policies needs to be enhanced, and there is a lack of effective incentive mechanisms for high-end, versatile talents.

## 4. Strategies for integrating culture, commerce, tourism, and sports to help build Haikou into an international consumption center city in Hainan

# 4.1. Strengthen top-level design and improve the mechanism of integrated development 4.1.1. Formulate unified planning

The government should enhance the overall planning for the integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, and formulate specific development plans and implementation schemes. It should clearly define the goals, key tasks, and safeguard measures for integrated development, reasonably plan industrial spaces, and promote the coordinated development of all industries. In these plans, it is essential to fully consider Haikou's unique resources and market demands, emphasizing differentiated development to avoid homogenized competition. For example, based on the cultural and tourism resources of different areas, create distinctive demonstration zones for the integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, such as a historical and cultural experience zone centered around the old arcade streets, and a coastal leisure commercial area based on Haikou Bay.

### 4.1.2. Establish a coordination mechanism

Establish and improve the collaborative cooperation mechanisms among cultural, commercial, tourism, and sports departments, enhancing communication, coordination, and information sharing among these departments. Form a leading group for the integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, and hold regular joint meetings to address major issues in integrated development. Establish a joint project promotion mechanism to unify the planning, packaging, and promotion of key integrated projects, integrating resources from all parties to form a cohesive effort. Additionally, encourage enterprises to strengthen cooperation by forming industry alliances to jointly engage in market expansion, product development, brand promotion, and other activities, achieving mutual benefits and win-win outcomes.

# 4.2. Dig deep into cultural connotation and build a distinctive integrated brand 4.2.1. Integration and innovative utilization of cultural resources

To deeply explore and systematically organize and study Haikou's historical, cultural, folk, and marine resources. By using digitalization and creative methods, transform these cultural resources into appealing cultural products and services. For example, by utilizing technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), create immersive cultural experiences that allow visitors to feel the charm of Haikou's historical culture firsthand. Develop culturally creative products with Hainanese characteristics, such as Li brocade, coconut carving, and sea porcelain, integrating cultural elements into everyday items to enhance their cultural value.

### 4.2.2. Brand building and promotion

Focusing on the integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, this study aims to create a series of Haikou-specific brands. With New Year's Eve City and International Performing Arts Capital as core brands, it will further enrich their connotations and enhance their recognition and reputation. Additionally, range of distinctive sub-brands, such as the Qilou Culture Festival, the Haikou Marathon, and the South China Sea Museum exhibitions, will be developed to form a comprehensive brand matrix. Brand promotion will be strengthened by leveraging mainstream media, social media, and tourism fairs both domestically and internationally to comprehensively promote Haikou's integrated cultural, commercial, tourism, and sports brands, thereby increasing their influence and market share.

# 4.3. Innovation and integration of business forms to enrich the supply of consumer products 4.3.1. Cultivating emerging business forms

Actively explore new models and forms of integration among culture, commerce, tourism, and sports to foster new consumption growth points. Develop the culture + technology + tourism model by creating smart tourist attractions that leverage big data and AI to enhance service quality and visitor experience. Promote the sports + health care + tourism model by developing sports and wellness tourism products, such as sports rehabilitation, health check-ups, and wellness vacations, to meet people's growing demand for a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, develop the nighttime economy by creating nighttime cultural and tourism consumption zones, hosting night performances, night markets, and light shows, to extend the consumption time and stimulate consumer activity.

### **4.3.2.** Optimize product structure

Based on market demand and visitor feedback, continuously optimize the integration of cultural, commercial, tourism, and sports products. Diversify tourism offerings by developing high-end resorts, business conferences,

educational tours, and rural tourism to cater to the needs of visitors at all levels. Enhance the quality of commercial products by introducing more international and local brands, enriching the variety of goods, and enhancing their fashion appeal and personalization. Innovate cultural products and sports events by increasing the diversity and professionalism of cultural performances, art exhibitions, and sports events to boost the appeal and competitiveness of these offerings.

### **4.4. Improve infrastructure, improve service quality, and internationalization level 4.4.1. Infrastructure construction**

Increase investment in transportation, communication, and energy infrastructure to improve the urban traffic network and enhance the accessibility of tourist attractions. Enhance the supporting facilities at tourist attractions, commercial districts, and sports venues, such as parking lots, public restrooms, visitor service centers, and charging stations, to improve the convenience and comfort of services. Promote the development of smart cities to enhance urban informatization and provide technical support for the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports. For example, develop a smart tourism platform to offer real-time information queries, online reservations, and intelligent navigation, thereby improving the efficiency of tourism services.

#### 4.4.2. Service quality improvement

Enhance the training of tourism service personnel, commercial professionals, cultural workers, and sports event organizers to improve their professional skills and service quality. Establish and improve mechanisms for monitoring service quality, strengthen supervision of the tourism, commercial, cultural, and sports markets, standardize market order, and protect consumer rights. Promote standardized services by developing integrated standards for cultural, commercial, tourism, and sports services to enhance the standardization and regulation of these services. Additionally, focus on personalized services by offering customized products based on tourists' needs and preferences, thereby increasing their satisfaction and loyalty.

### 4.4.3. Internationalization of service capacity building

Enhance the training of foreign language talents to improve the foreign language proficiency of professionals in tourism, commerce, culture, and sports, particularly in spoken English and listening skills. Provide multilingual service signs and language services at airports, hotels, scenic spots, and shopping malls. Introduce internationally renowned service companies and management teams to learn from advanced international service concepts and management practices, thereby enhancing Haikou's international service standards. Additionally, strengthen exchanges and cooperation with international tourism organizations, cultural institutions, and sports event organizers, actively participate in international tourism, cultural, and sports activities, and enhance Haikou's international recognition and influence.

### 4.5. Strengthen talent support and build a talent development system

### 4.5.1. Talent training

Enhance collaboration with universities and vocational colleges, optimize the curriculum, and introduce specialized courses that integrate culture, commerce, tourism, and sports, such as cultural tourism management, sports tourism, and commercial cultural creativity, to cultivate professionals who meet market demands. Establish internship and training bases, strengthen practical teaching, and enhance students' practical skills and innovation capabilities. Encourage companies to conduct internal training to improve employees' professional skills and

overall quality. Additionally, organize various vocational skill competitions and training activities to provide a platform for talents to showcase their abilities and enhance their capabilities.

### 4.5.2. Talent introduction

To formulate more favorable policies for attracting top talents in cultural, commercial, tourism, and sports sectors from both domestic and international sources to develop in Haikou. Provide policy support in housing, children's education, and medical care to alleviate the concerns of these talents. Establish a special fund for talent introduction to offer financial subsidies and rewards to high-end and urgently needed talents. Enhance connections with domestic and international talent markets by organizing job fairs, project matchmaking events, and other activities to broaden the channels for talent introduction. Additionally, flexible recruitment methods can be used to attract renowned experts and scholars from home and abroad to provide intellectual support for the integrated development of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports in Haikou.

### 4.5.3. Talent motivation

Establish and improve the talent incentive mechanism to fully mobilize the enthusiasm and creativity of talents. Enhance the compensation system by providing appropriate remuneration based on their performance and contributions, thereby increasing their income levels. Establish a talent reward fund to recognize and reward those who have made significant contributions to the integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports. Offer broad development opportunities and promotion prospects to talents, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship, and achieving the organic integration of personal value with urban development.

# 5. Conclusion

The integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports is a key strategy for Haikou to become an international consumer city. This integration is crucial for enriching consumption scenarios, enhancing the city's brand image, promoting industrial synergy, and boosting consumption growth. Despite some achievements in this area, Haikou still faces challenges such as insufficient integration depth, inadequate industrial coordination, the need for improved infrastructure and services, and a shortage of talent. By implementing strategies such as strengthening top-level design, exploring cultural connotations, innovating integrated business models, improving infrastructure, enhancing service quality and internationalization, and reinforcing talent support, Haikou can effectively promote the deep integration of culture, commerce, tourism, and sports.

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