

Research on Contemporary Cruise Ship Livery Art Design from the Perspective of Brand Identity

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Abstract:

With the vigorous development of the global cruise ship industry, the contemporary cruise ship livery art design is no longer merely an aesthetic expression but an important visual carrier for the brand recognition of cruise ships. It is of great significance in enhancing the brand recognition of cruise ships, strengthening market competitiveness, improving tourists' perception, and conveying brand value. This study reviews the historical development of cruise ship livery art design. By combining typical cases such as Royal Caribbean Cruises, Carnival Cruises, Norwegian Cruises, Disney Cruises and MSC Cruises, it deeply analyzes the characteristics of contemporary cruise ship livery art design. From the perspective of brand identity, the principles of contemporary cruise ship livery art design are proposed, the future development trend of cruise ship livery art is explored, and the healthy and sustainable development of the vitality of cruise ship brands is promoted.

Keywords:

Cruise Ship, Cruise Ship Livery Design, Brand Identity, Appearance Painting

1. Introduction

Cruise ships, as a type of high-value-added vessel, have continuously upgraded their functions since their birth in the 19th century, gradually shifting from the core positioning of transportation to that of leisure and entertainment [1]. Nowadays, cruise travel has begun to become the choice of more consumers, and the demand for cruise ships and the number of the target audience has increased accordingly. According to the cruise status report released by the International Cruise Association (CLIA) in 2024, the passenger volume of cruise ships reached 31.7 million in 2023, a 7% increase compared to 2019. The number of new cruise passengers is also on the rise, with 27% of tourists being new cruise passengers in the past two years [2]. With the growth of cruise tourism demand, cruise ships need to undergo design updates to meet consumer demands. Not only does the interior design of the cruise ship need to be upgraded, but also the exterior livery design of the cruise ship needs to be upgraded [3]. The exterior coating design of a cruise ship is an important memory point of the

cruise ship and the visual carrier of the "first impression at sea" of the cruise ship. It plays a significant role in shaping the brand image of cruise companies, expanding brand influence, reflecting the unique style of cruise ships, and enhancing the experience of tourists. It is a strategic element for cruise enterprises to further achieve differentiated competition.

Most of the existing studies focus on the technical optimization in the field of ship engineering or the development of new anti-fouling coatings, as well as the interior design of cruise cabins. However, there is a relative lack of research on the visual value of cruise ship exterior aesthetics. Some researchers conducted a systematic visual analysis of the research literature on cruise ships collected in the scientific network database from 1996 to 2019. The analysis results show that the current hot topics in cruise research can be summarized as cruise tourism, luxury cruise ships, cruise passengers, destination ports, the environment and biological protection. Future research in the cruise field will develop in the directions of the cruise supply chain, cruise technology, children's cruise experience, brand reputation and luxury cruise [4]. Therefore, the exterior coating design of cruise ship brands has research value.

The exterior painting of a cruise ship includes colors, decorative patterns, logos, and text. After integrated design, these elements present a visual effect with great aesthetic value. The historical development of cruise ship livery design has undergone an evolution from functionality to artistry and branding. Cruise brands achieve visual differentiation through their standardized livery designs, but there are slight differences in livery among each ship within the same brand or among ships of different classes. Standardized coating design externally and differentiated coating design internally. The core value lies in conveying the unique visual representation and brand spirit of different cruise brands, triggering emotional resonance between tourists and the brands, and enhancing the brand's affinity.

This research summarizes the characteristics of contemporary cruise ship livery art design, combines color psychology and brand communication theory, and conducts research on globally renowned cruise ships. Including typical cases such as Royal Caribbean Cruises, Carnival Cruises, Norwegian Cruises, Disney Cruises and MSC Cruises. Propose the principles of contemporary cruise ship livery art design from the perspective of brand identity. Explore the future development trends of cruise ship livery art to further promote the healthy and sustainable development of the vitality of cruise ship brands.

2. Characteristics of Contemporary Cruise Ship Livery Art Design

2.1. Coating color selection

2.1.1 High saturation and contrasting colors

The livery of contemporary cruise ships mostly uses highly saturated colors and contrasting colors. The color combination of bright blue and coral orange is not only highly saturated but also creates a color picture with a contrast between blue and orange. Cruise ship livery follows strict visual contrast rules in color configuration. When the base color of the hull is white, select colors with high saturation or medium lightness to construct the optimal visual contrast. When the base color is dark, high-brightness colors are needed to create a dual contrast of light and shade as well as hue. The yellow color has the strongest visual tension in such scenes. High-saturation

colors and contrasting colors create a strong visual impact, attracting the attention of young consumer groups.

2.1.2. Brand color and theme color

Cruise companies often select a specific color as their brand color to enhance the color memory points of the brand. Royal Caribbean Cruises often uses bright blue, while most of Disney's cruises are classic red and yellow. This signature color coating runs through the hull, chimneys, signs and other locations, which can further enhance the brand recognition of the cruise ship and form a unified visual symbol. For cruise ships of different routes or themes, cruise companies will apply color psychology to construct different color experiences. Color psychology provides an important theoretical basis and practical guidance for visual communication design, further enhancing the appeal of design works [5]. Take polar exploration and tropical resort-themed cruise ships as examples. Such cruise ships often use theme colors such as glacier blue and palm green to echo the scene atmosphere of the cruise ship and enhance the experience of tourists.

2.2. The pattern creativity of the coating

2.2.1. Ribbon pattern

The painting design of cruise ships often adopts ribbon-shaped patterns. This type of pattern can extend the streamlined form of the hull and enhance the overall appearance. In the livery design of large cruise ships, large areas of white, black or dark blue are often used as the main colors of the ships. Highly saturated color bands extend longitudinally along the hull as decorative patterns. While enhancing the hull design of the cruise ship, it also serves as a visual metaphor for the ship's movement.

In cruise ship livery, strip-shaped color bands often appear in the blank areas of the hull's side walls, maintaining a parallel relationship with the edge of the deck. When the banded decorative pattern is located at the junction of the white superstructure and the dark hull, Color selection should follow the principle of gradual change in lightness, that is, use transitional tones with lightness values between the two base colors. When the ribbon pattern is located at the junction of the white superstructure and the dark hull, the color selection should follow the principle of gradual lightness. Adopt transitional tones with lightness values between the two colors. Take Royal Caribbean Cruises as an example. Its livery design adopts the design of composite color bands. The brand's representative color, blue, is taken as the design base color, and a blue and black two-color composite color band with a gradient from head to tail is designed in the middle of the hull. The gradient treatment of the color band further enhances the longitudinal extension sense of the hull.

2.2.2. Geometric shape pattern

In the exterior painting of cruise ships, apart from the color band painting, small-scale geometric elements are often configured in specific areas. This type of pattern assumes a dual function at the visual level through its form composition and color configuration. As a visual focal point, it connects with other coating elements to enhance the three-dimensional layers of the cruise ship's architectural structure. Below the inclined structure on the top of the superstructure of Carnival Cruises is a combination of red and blue geometric color blocks. This modular splicing fills the gap in the transition between the hull's curved surface and the straight structure,

ingeniously geometrically abstracts the brand's signature chimney form. This not only ensures the integrity of the hull design but also perfectly highlights the brand's visual identity. It truly reflects the deep integration of artistic expression and brand communication in cruise ship livery.

2.2.3. Color block segmented pattern

In the livery design of large cruise ships, color block division is a widely used composition strategy. The visual form of the hull is reconstructed through the segmentation of color blocks to achieve the visual reengineering of the spatial structure. In the cruise ship livery design, the color block segmented patterns are mostly concentrated in the area of the main hull. The hull is divided into two or more independent areas with color differences through division forms such as linear division, arc-shaped transition and compound curves. The visual tension generated by the division of color blocks can construct a more stable visual center of gravity.

2.2.4. Painted pattern

In the continuous innovation of ship painting technology, the painting design of large cruise ships has broken through the limitations of traditional color block segmentation and extended to more artistically expressive painted patterns. The irregular composition and the brushstrokes jointly construct a narrative space full of dynamic tension. In the process of painting and coating, techniques such as color gradients and image superimposition can further enhance the recognition of cruise ships and express the cultural connotation of the brand. Today, many large cruise ships constantly change the exterior painted coatings of the ships under different seasons and themes to update the visual experience of tourists. This makes painted patterns a major mainstream in the exterior painting design of today's large cruise ships.

2.3. Coating style expression

2.3.1. Minimalism

The minimalist style is widely popular in cruise ship livery. It often features clean and simple lines, geometric color blocks and large areas of blank space. The simple design gives the cruise ship a strong modern feel. The painting design of MSC Cruises is such a minimalist black-and-white stripe design.

2.3.2. Thematic narrative and immersive scenes

Cruise ship livery is often designed around the theme and scene of the cruise ship. Take the cruise ship with the theme of ocean exploration as an example. These types of cruise ships commonly use perspective painting and relief techniques to create three-dimensional scenes on the hull, evoking the feeling of surging waves and tropical jungles. Cartoon characters and castle elements often appear on Disney cruises, and the entire cruise ship is themed around fairy tales. This immersive scene and thematic narrative cruise ship livery style are conducive to enhancing tourists' sense of immersion and improving the cruise experience.

2.3.3. Naturalistic style

The naturalistic style is also widely applied in cruise ship livery, specifically manifested in the imitation and refinement of Marine animal and plant elements.

Through parametric design, the colors of coral reefs and the dynamics of fish schools in the ocean are imitated to achieve organic form interaction. The concepts of environmental protection are conveyed through elements such as green plants and water droplet ripples, highlighting the green ecological painting and natural style of the hull. The application of water ripples in cruise ship livery is extremely ingenious. As a traditional decorative water pattern in China, it is mostly applied in the visual communication design of ceramics. The water pattern not only carries the ancient people's boundless yearning for and profound understanding of the beauty of nature but also has extraordinary visual effects and communication value [6]. Therefore, the extraction and application of water ripples is a new development direction for creating cruise ship livery with Chinese characteristics.

2.3.4. Fashion trend

Some cruise ships introduce street graffiti, cartoon illustrations or pop art to continuously attract young customer groups. Carry out cross-border cooperation and design with artists, or collaborate with fashion brands and movie IPs. Incorporate their signature visual symbols into the cruise ship livery to enhance the sense of identity among the young customer group. Royal Caribbean Cruises once collaborated with Marvel Heroes to further enhance its publicity.

2.4. Innovation of Coating materials

To reduce Marine pollution, protect the Marine environment and achieve the healthy and sustainable development of the cruise industry, the selection of coatings for the exterior of cruise ships needs to take into account both color firmness and environmental friendliness. In recent years, to achieve the required rheological properties and sustainability goals, the coatings industry has no longer insisted on using traditional resin formulations containing high concentrations of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) [7]. Some traditional high-pollution color materials have been replaced, while low-VOC (volatile organic compounds) coatings that are both anti-corrosive and environmentally friendly are gradually being applied. With the application of LED dynamic color technology, some cruise ships have begun to embed LED lighting systems in local areas. Achieve dynamic color changes through programmable lighting effects and design a night light show exclusive to cruise ships. This breaks through the limitation of traditional cruise ship coatings, which only have static coatings, and further realizes the material innovation of cruise ship coatings.

3. Case Analysis of Contemporary Cruise Ship Livery Design

3.1. Royal Caribbean Cruises

The livery design of Royal Caribbean Cruises is full of a sense of technology and conveys the spirit of adventure. In terms of color selection, iconic blue is usually used as the main color, combined with highly contrasting colors such as bright yellow and metallic silver, resulting in a coating design with a strong sense of futurism. The hull's coating design incorporates streamlined geometric cutting patterns, and the sides of the ship are painted with giant brand fonts, further enhancing the brand recognition of the cruise ship. The brand positioning of Royal Caribbean Cruises is enterprising and adventurous, and the group it attracts is more young people who pursue technological experiences.

3.2. Carnival Cruises

Carnival Cruises focuses on fun parties and family entertainment. With red, blue and white as the main tones, supplemented by high-saturation color blocks such as fluorescent powder and bright orange, a vibrant and festive atmosphere is created. The “whale tail” chimney and cartoonish Marine creature patterns are the hallmarks of Carnival Cruises. The livery style of Carnival Cruise is exaggerated and distinct, in line with its brand slogan “Fun Ship”. Through visual impact, it strengthens the entertainment genes of the brand and attracts more young families and party lovers.

3.3. Norwegian Cruises

Norwegian Cruises focuses on modern art and high-end experiences. With minimalist white and light gray as the base tones, it is dotted with gold or dark blue to highlight the elegance and luxury of the cruise brand. The hull design incorporates abstract artistic lines and cultural symbols. The unique combination of matte metallic paint and glass curtain walls enhances the texture of the hull, echoing the brand's positioning of “free and luxurious travel”. Norwegian Cruises conveys its unique brand tone through restrained and refined visual language, targeting the higher-end customer group that pays more attention to artistic aesthetics.

3.4. Disney Cruises

Disney Cruises builds the magic and IP experience of Disney around the fairy tale system of the Disney Company. The cruise ship features classic colors such as Mickey red, black and white, as well as dreamy shades of light blue and purple. The hull is painted with Disney characters, creating a dreamy Disney World. Such as the hidden Mickey Mouse pattern on Disney cruise ships, the silhouette design of the castle on the chimney, and the magic stars integrated into the details of the ship's sides. At night, cruise ships even use projection technology to transform the hull into a dynamic fairy tale scene. The design of Disney Cruises closely caters to the needs of family travelers. Through IP narratives and detailed Easter eggs, it creates a “mobile Disney Park”, further strengthening the emotional connection of family outings.

3.5. MSC Cruises

MSC Cruises emphasizes minimalist luxury and environmental protection concepts. They often use white and black as the main colors, complemented by champagne gold and titanium gray metal decorations. The sides of the ships are painted with a giant “MSC” brand logo. The hull uses streamlined cuts and geometric blank Spaces to convey the brand's high-end texture. Cruise ships use environmentally friendly coatings, taking into account both color durability and ecological friendliness. MSC Cruise lines target high-end travelers who pursue understated luxury and attach great importance to environmental protection concepts. The brand tone of being exquisite yet not complicated, luxurious yet not extravagant, gives MSC Cruises its unique competitiveness among various brands.

4. The Design Principles of Cruise Ship Livery Art from the Perspective of Brand Identity

4.1. The principle of brand image consistency

The livery design of cruise ships should be based on the brand's signature colors, running through visual elements such as the hull, chimneys, and logos, to form a unified brand symbol. Brand identity helps customers identify and distinguish other competing brands [8]. In terms of coating design, it is also necessary to reflect the core values of the brand and convey the brand story through specific patterns, colors and styles. Royal Caribbean Cruises features a combination of bright blue and yellow, while Disney Cruises has the classic color scheme of red, yellow and white. Different cruise ships under the same cruise brand should maintain consistency in their livery styles to form a unique series of visual languages for the cruise brand, which is conducive to enhancing the brand's recognition.

4.2. The principle of brand personality differentiation

The unique cruise ship livery patterns can create a brand's exclusive visual symbol. Cruise companies collaborate with artists or designers to elevate ordinary livery designs into works of art, creating unique visual memory points for the brand. In today's market, consumers' preferences are increasingly driven by personalized demands. There are numerous brands and products, and when choosing a brand, consumers will give priority to brand recognition [9]. Combining the brand's history and the characteristics of cruise routes, extracting different regional cultural symbols, highlighting the differentiation of brand personality, and enhancing the brand's competitiveness.

4.3. The functional principle

The exterior coating design of cruise ships should take into account both aesthetics and environmental protection. More environmentally friendly materials such as low-VOC coatings or self-cleaning coatings should be selected to reduce the impact of coatings on the marine ecosystem. Cruise ship painting should focus on functional principles to ensure bright and lasting colors during cruise ship use as well as low-cost cleaning and maintenance in the later stage. The exterior coating of cruise ships also serves the function of area division, guiding passengers' line of sight through color division or patterns and optimizing the spatial perception of the hull. Cruise ship livery design can highlight the entrance area and functional zones, enhancing the passenger experience. Up to now, more and more cruise ships have begun to incorporate LED lighting technology, enabling the cruise ship livery to present dynamic lighting effects in specific scenes. The addition of this kind of night light show further enhances the interesting interaction between cruise ships and tourists.

5. The Impact of Cruise Ship Livery Design on Brand Identity

5.1. Visual impact

Cruise ship livery is the most intuitive visual carrier. High-saturation colors, iconic patterns and unique shapes can create a strong visual memory point for people, shaping the first impression of the brand and directly influencing consumers' perception of the brand. The Mickey red and black color scheme of Disney Cruises quickly catches people's eyes through the contrast of colors, making the cruise ship a distinctive visual focus in port or aerial photography scenes. This visual impact directly determines the brand's recognition, making the cruise ship stand out in the complex and diverse environment and become a "mobile billboard". As an important element in visual design, the choice of color can greatly affect the viewer's mood and

aesthetic perception. Neutral colors can lead to higher pleasure and higher aesthetic perception; Warm tones and high brightness can lead to more positive emotions and aesthetic perceptions. Color is positively correlated with aesthetic perception. In the livery design of cruise ships, corresponding colors should be selected for different brands, themes, etc., to enhance the visual impact while also providing positive guidance for the emotions of different tourists [10].

5.2. Brand Communication degree

Cruise ships promote their brands through global navigation and media exposure, and at this time, cruise ship livery transforms abstract brand value into perceptible visual language. Integrate the brand's story into the livery design of cruise ships, and through scene-based visual experiences, evoke emotional resonance among tourists and enhance their brand loyalty. In today's highly competitive market environment, semantic elements such as product appearance semantics, brand slogans and brand stories can trigger emotional resonance among consumers. The value of brand information, its diverse forms and personalized customization can catalyze the deep integration of consumers [11]. Personalized coating designs are more likely to be captured and shared by tourists, creating secondary dissemination on social platforms and further expanding the brand's influence. Excellent cruise ship livery design can transform its brand concept into a communicable visual asset, achieving low-cost and high-coverage brand exposure for cruise ships.

5.3. Market positioning

In the fierce competition of the cruise market, the livery design is the key to the differentiation of cruise ships, directly affecting their market positioning and the choice of customer groups. The highly technological livery of Royal Caribbean Cruises has attracted young customers who pursue innovation. The minimalist design of MSC Cruises is targeted at high-end businesses and environmentalists. The bright colors and cartoon elements of Carnival Cruises are targeted at family travelers and party lovers. Livery design can help different cruise brands establish their unique positioning in the market and gain market share through visual differentiation and cultural empowerment.

6. Conclusions

Analyze and summarize the characteristics of representative cruise brands, study the livery art design of cruise ships, and reveal its important role in brand identity. That is to say, the livery design is not only the key to beautifying the appearance of cruise ships but also the core element in shaping and conveying the brand characteristics of cruise ships. In the livery design of cruise ships, elements such as color, pattern and overall style jointly build the unique brand image of the cruise ship, enabling it to better integrate with its own brand positioning, concept and target market, and further enhance the brand's recognition. Finally, the study proposed the principles of contemporary cruise ship livery art design from the perspective of brand identity. Namely, the principle of brand image consistency, the principle of brand personality differentiation, and the principle of functionality. Through the design of exterior livery, cruise ships create a harmonious and unified visual atmosphere and diverse artistic effects, thereby better shaping brand personality, expanding brand influence and enhancing tourists' travel experience [12]. In the future, the art design of cruise ship livery will pay more attention to diversified and personalized development to

adapt to the changing consumer demands and the intensified market competition. At the same time, in response to the trend of environmentally friendly design, the greater adoption of green and sustainable coating materials and technologies will become a new direction for cruise ship coating art design, promoting the sustained and healthy development of the cruise ship industry.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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