

Research on IP Image Design of Internet Brand Enabled by AIGC - Taking “Musical Monster” Internet Brand as an Example

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Abstract:

Under the background of the great development of artificial intelligence content generation (AIGC) technology, this research focuses on the design of Internet brand IP image. Through analyzing the design method of IP image, AIGC is used to realize the efficient generation and application of IP image. Based on the traditional IP image design method, combined with AIGC technology tool, the IP image rendering generation is realized. An artificial neural network machine learning algorithm based on diffusion model is used to train an AIGC model that can realize the redrawing of IP image features, guide it to generate different styles of image, and apply the generated image to brand communication. This study takes “music rumble” Internet music brand as an example, uses AIGC tool to draw and generate IP image, and then uses diffusion generation model for training to expand the style and application scenarios of IP image. The design process and practice strategy of enabling Internet brand IP image through AIGC provide method support and design practice reference for solving common problems and promoting brand development.

Keywords:

AIGC, Internet Brand, IP Image Design, Generative Design Process

1. Introduction

In the era of mobile internet, with the increasing number of internet brands, it is necessary to focus more on creating distinctive brand IP images, creatively expressing the core values and personality of the brand to establish an emotional connection with consumers. This places higher demands on brand IP images. Internet brands refer to those that provide their internet products or services to users through the internet, taking the internet as their space for survival and development. [1] The IP images of internet brands are usually designed to meet the needs of the digital age and social media, and they possess the characteristics of being three-dimensional, personified, and contextualized. [2] With the continuous development of science and technology, internet brands can adapt to the new era by integrating brand IP images with new

technologies, and enhancing the design of internet brand IP images through artificial intelligence.

AIGC, short for Artificial Intelligence Generated Content, refers to a technology that generates relevant content based on artificial intelligence techniques such as generative adversarial networks (GAN) and large pre-trained models, through learning and recognition of existing data with appropriate generalization ability. The core idea of AIGC technology is to use artificial intelligence algorithms to generate content with certain creativity and quality. [3] By inputting keywords, descriptions, or samples, AIGC can generate matching articles, images, audio, and other content, opening up new creative paths for IP image design.

This study deeply analyzes the impact of AIGC technology on the design of internet brand IP images, taking the “Musical Monster” internet music brand as a case, and elaborately discusses its design process and application scenarios. The research aims to provide new perspectives and methods for the workflow of IP image design, thereby enhancing design efficiency and promoting brand development.

2. The Current Situation of Internet Brand IP Image Design

2.1. Situation Analysis

Research on IP image design in the field is relatively early in foreign countries. Taking Japan and the United States as examples, they are the two major sources of global super IPs. The development of brand IP images in Japan has gone through two generations. The first generation of brand IP image design is represented by "Hello Kitty" and "Doraemon", with "Hello Kitty" maintaining image updates every year since its launch in 1974. The second generation is represented by classic brand IP images such as "Pikachu" and "Totoro". In the United States, typical cases of brand IP image design include "Bibendum", the classic IP image of Michelin tires, which was born in 1894 and the current image was launched in 2000.

In China, internet brands tend to choose personified and highly interesting animal shapes as their corporate images. Compared with human or non-object images, these animal-shaped images are more likely to be loved and accepted by the target audience due to their wit and vitality. In e-commerce brands, “Tmall” of Alibaba was selected from the works of netizens and professional design teams through a solicitation activity. “JOY” of JD.com has undergone multiple image upgrades through user voting and online questionnaires. As a leading domestic internet food brand, “Three Squirrels” uses “Cool Squirrel”, “Cheap Squirrel”, and “Pretty Squirrel” as its IP images and launched 3D images in 2016. In the field of internet music brands, “QQ Music” under Tencent uses “QQ Penguin” as its image, which has been deeply rooted in people's hearts for more than a decade. “Kugou Music” has launched a cartoon image - “Cool Dog” and hopes to attract more young users through it. NetEase Cloud Music has launched IP characters named Duoduo and Xixi, which are based on the prototype of a deer. The pronunciations of their names are derived from the musical notes “do” and “xi”. The IP character of K Karaoke is called Xiaochang. This cute mascot is the iconic image of Karaoke.

2.2. Existing Issues of Internet Brand IP Image

With the continuous development of the IP craze, the market competition has intensified, and the demands of the public have become more diverse, younger, and

experiential. This has raised new requirements for Internet brand IP images [4]. Users now place greater emphasis on their intrinsic value and intangible services[5]. Through the investigation of the development of domestic Internet brand IP (i.e., Figure 1) the following common problems can be identified:

Brand	Mascot Icon	Name	Upgrade Frequency	Last Updated	User Participation
Sanrio		HelloKitty	49	2023	—
Michelin		Bibendum	7	2000	—
OICQ		QQ	6	2016	Vote
Tmall		Tmall	3	2019	Work Collection
JD		Joy	3	2018	Vote
Three Squirrels		Xiaoku Xiaomei Xiaojian	4	2016	Topic Interaction
Zhihu		Liu Kanshan	—	—	—
KUGOU		Kugou	1	2018	—
NetEase CloudMusic		DO Si	—	—	—
Changba		xiaochang	—	—	—

Figure 1. Current Status of Internet Brand IP at Home and Abroad.

2.2.1. Monotonous form presentation

The personalized characteristics of the IP image are not obvious, and there is a lack of unique charm. Most Internet brands tend to adopt cartoon or anime styles when designing the IP image, which leads to the homogenization of IP images in the market, lacking uniqueness and innovation. Secondly, using the same and unchanged IP image continuously will cause consumers to experience aesthetic fatigue. Finally, most current IP images merely exist as visual symbols and lack opportunities for interaction and participation with users.

2.2.2. Slow image update

In the rapidly changing information era, the focus of consumers is constantly evolving. To attract consumers' attention, IP images need to be updated in terms of setting and visual image in a timely manner to maintain their freshness and relevance. However, many Internet brands still use the original design and ignore adjusting and upgrading the character settings and image based on the latest trends. This results in these brands lacking forward-thinking marketing activities and failing to comprehensively update and iterate the personality traits and image scenarios of the characters. Beyond maintaining the basic visual elements, other elements are not "long-term maintained".

2.2.3. Lack of user interaction

Currently, only a portion of brand users can interact with the IP image through voting, topic interaction, and work collection methods. Most brands ignore the importance of interaction with users. For Internet brands, user participation can bring fresh creativity to the brand IP, enhance the diversity and innovation of the brand IP, and at the same time, this sense of participation can strengthen brand loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion. An open participation model can promote a closer emotional connection between the brand and consumers, and at the same time, enhance the brand's recognition and memory. IP images created through user co-creation are more likely to be widely shared on social media, thereby strengthening the socialized dissemination of the brand image and bringing deeper market participation and wider influence.

Facing the common problems in the design of Internet brand IP images, the emergence of AIGC technology has brought revolutionary changes. It not only generates a large number of design proposals in a short time but also can be deeply customized and optimized based on the core values of the brand and the preferences of the target audience, providing a brand-new design method. This enables brand image design to be no longer limited by traditional thinking and can break through the existing framework to create more diversified and personalized brand images, effectively addressing many challenges faced by current IP image design.

3. AIGC Workflow for Brand IP Image Design

AIGC is a new type of content production method following User-Generated Content (UGC) and Professional Generated Content (PGC), covering various forms such as AI painting and AI writing [6]. It receives human task instructions and, with the assistance of AI's understanding ability, imagination, and creative capabilities, can create various contents based on the specified requirements, such as articles, short stories, reports, music, images, and even videos. Current AIGC-related application tools include: Chat GPT, Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, etc.

These technologies are changing the production mode of content, promoting the digital transformation process, and demonstrating extensive application value in multiple fields. In the application of the field of art design, it covers various aspects such as painting, music, literature, and film. It provides new creative tools for artists and designers, promoting the diversity and innovation of creative expression. Currently, AIGC can be used as an art creation tool to build a systematic design workflow and create new design methods. For example, scholars like Song Yu and Qian Xiaosong utilized AIGC technology, taking Qi Baishi's classic painting series "Crabs" as an example, to explore the painting characteristics of traditional Chinese paintings and achieve efficient conversion and generation of cultural and creative products [7]. Scholars like Zhang Jian and Wang Yuxin, in collaboration with AIGC, created design proposals and summarized the process of AIGC in the design of traditional culture inheritance [8]. Specifically, the IP image design workflow based on AIGC (i.e., Figure 2) includes the following five steps:

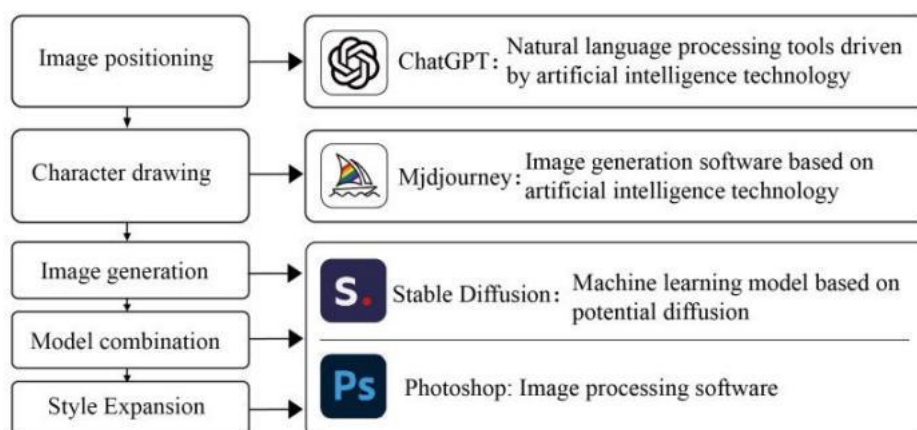


Figure 2 .Workflow Diagram of IP Image Based on AIGC

(1). Image positioning: Utilize tools like Chat GPT to gather design inspiration and clearly define the design direction and style positioning of the IP image. Ensure that the IP image aligns with the brand concept.

(2). Image drawing: Input the conceptual text description into Midjourney to create initial creative sketches and concepts. Visualize the abstract concepts to make them concrete. Based on the images in the sketches, combine the design concept to draw the initial draft of the IP image.

(3). Image generation: Based on the initial draft, use tools like Stable Diffusion to generate high-quality design images. Use image processing software like Photoshop for final manual fine-tuning to complete the presentation of the IP image.

(4). Model building: Utilize the autonomous training of Stable Diffusion to generate algorithm models. Through the models, generate IP image designs of the same style and apply them in different scene scenarios.

(5). Style expansion: Based on the IP image model, generate different styles of IP images according to the different event themes of the brand.

The above steps constitute the core design process of IP image based on AIGC. In actual operation, this process needs to be flexibly adjusted and appropriately expanded according to different brand concepts and user needs. At the same time, designers should continuously optimize and improve throughout the design process to ensure the effectiveness and forward-looking nature of AIGC in IP image design.

4. IP Image Design of the “Musical Monster” Brand under AIGC Technology

Using the IP image design method proposed above, that is, the IP image design workflow based on AIGC (Figure 1), a specific case demonstration is carried out. Taking the “Musical Monster” Internet music brand as an example, the IP image design process includes: image positioning, image sketch, image generation, model building, and final draft production.

4.1. Image positioning

“Musical Monster” proposes “Music is in sync with the world”. Its name originates from “Musical Monster”, representing a harmonious and joyful music atmosphere, connecting the world together. Music creates happiness, shares happiness, and conveys happiness. “Monster” represents the deep and long-lasting drum sound,

showcasing the melodious sound of traditional instruments, symbolizing the brand's breaking of conventions and innovating style in the collision of classic and modern, leading the trend. Around keywords such as "world, harmony, joy, resonance", a cheerful digital music brand is constructed. The main IP image of "Musical Monster" - "Monster". Inspired by the Spring and Autumn era mythical beast from Henan Museum, it is believed to be the drum stand or zither stand used in ancient times, with a dragon-like head opening its mouth and tongue, and small flowers on the face, very "endearing", and mainly in green color, symbolizing vitality. The "Museum" sound effect is "Monster", and the dragon culture has become an important part of Eastern culture and a cultural symbol for China facing the world.

4.2. Image drawing

This is the initial stage of the design process. Based on the core value of the brand and the preferences of the target audience, create unique image sketches. During this process, Midjourney, an AIGC tool, is used to assist in design. Midjourney generates images that are more divergent and uncertain, generating creative and diverse sketches that typically showcase the basic characteristics and style of the brand image, stimulating the imagination and creativity of the designer.

Based on the characteristics of the "Museum" IP image, extract keywords such as "Museum, interesting, cute, happy, laughing heartily, fashionable, sporty, green and orange color". Through text description, create a large number of inspiration images and conduct initial creative sketching and conception. The author quickly determined the concept of the IP image through a large number of Midjourney creative sketches and began to draw detailed image sketches.

4.3. Image generation

Using the AIGC tool Stable Diffusion, these hand-drawn sketches were transformed into 3D digital images, generating consistent style and stable drawing style brand IP images. During this process, the image can be modified and optimized multiple times as needed until the desired effect is achieved. The specific steps are as follows: using Stable Diffusion to generate images based on input images, by inputting the line drawing of the hand-drawn IP image, adding Controlnet to control details to generate different styles of pictures, making the IP image more three-dimensional and vivid, and finally selecting the most suitable one for detailed adjustment. (i.e., Figure 3, Figure 4)

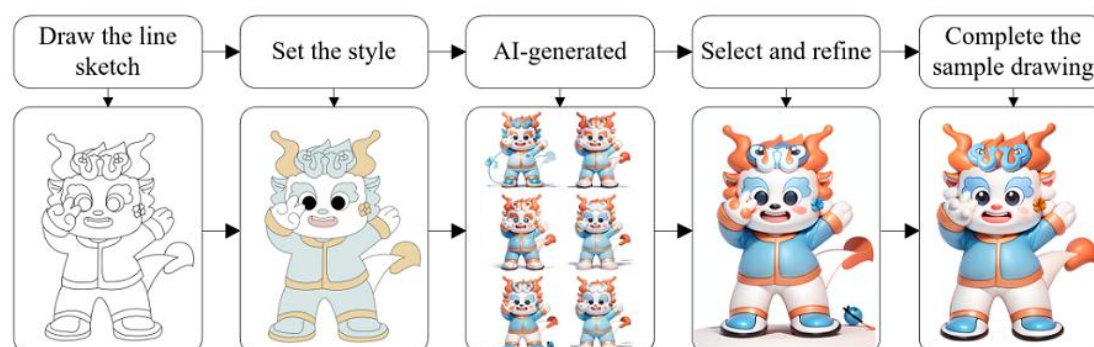


Figure 3. "Museum" IP Character Generation Process.



Figure 4. “Museum” IP Character Generation Poster.

4.4. Model Construction

The promotional model of brand IP images in the new media era is not fixed. It often changes the style of the image subject according to different scenarios to reflect the vitality of the brand [9]. By constructing an IP image model that can adapt to the characteristics of multiple platforms, we can conveniently expand the style of the IP image and ensure its applicability and consistency in different occasions. With the help of AIGC, a series of models with the characteristics of the “Museum” IP image are trained. In the future, by selecting the pre-made Lora model and adjusting the prompt words and simple parameters, different styles of the “Museum” IP image can be obtained and applied in different scenarios.

The design process is divided into three steps. First, organize the “Museum” IP image material library; second, train the Lora model through the material library; finally, test the trained Lora model with Stable Diffusion. The specific steps are as follows: (i.e., Figure 5)

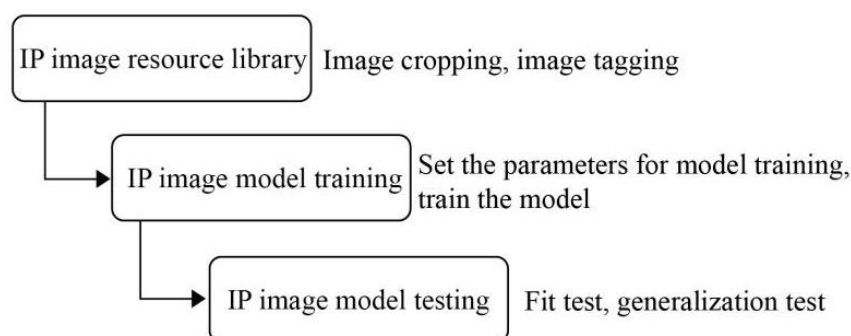


Figure 5. “Museum” IP character Lora model production process flowchart.

Firstly, the material library is organized. Use SD-Trainer to label the images to help the Lora model better understand the content and semantics of the images, including the trigger words for training the model. For example, the trigger word for the “Museum” IP character Lora model is “Museum”. Secondly, enter the formal Lora model training section, which is divided into setting the model training parameters and training the model two parts. After the training parameters are set, start training the model. The process of model training has many uncertainties and requires appropriate optimization based on understanding the parameters. Finally, two sets of models for the “Museum” IP character were trained, and tests were conducted from two perspectives: Lora model fitting test and Lora model generalization test, to find the optimal Lora model. (i.e., Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 8)

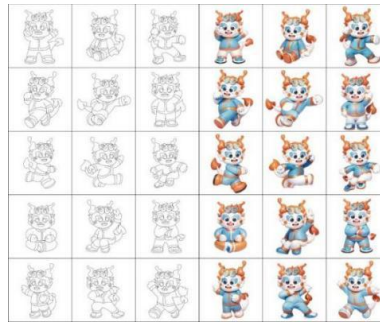


Figure 6. “Museum” IP Character Resource Library.

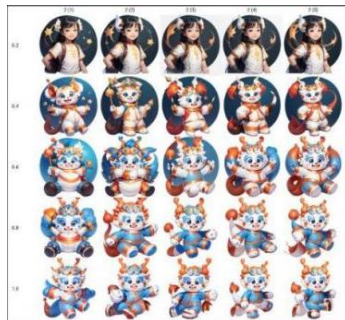


Figure 7. Lora Model Fit Test.



Figure 8. Lora Model Generalization Test.

4.5. Style Expansion

Using the trained model to generate different styles of the “Museum” IP characters. Selecting festival themes such as “New Year” and “Children’s Day”, the first being the 2024 Spring Festival theme. We used keywords related to the theme such as “festivals, Chinese New Year, Chinese architecture, drums and gongs, performances, firecrackers, lanterns” etc. These keywords were combined with our trained “Museum” IP character model and the images were generated by adjusting relevant parameters. Then, further adjustments were made in Photoshop, and finally a Spring Festival poster was produced (Figure 9). Secondly, in the “Children’s Day” theme, keywords such as “Children’s Day, park, blue sky, white clouds, nature, playing, cheerful” were used to generate the IP characters. The entire scene exudes a joyful atmosphere, and the IP characters present a natural, lively, and adorable characteristic, consistent with the harmonious and joyful music atmosphere of the “Museum” digital music brand. (i.e., Figure 9, Figure 10)



Figure 9. “Museum” IP character New Year poster.



Figure 10. “Museum” IP character Children's Day poster.

5. Advantages of AIGC Technology in Brand IP Image Design

5.1. Creativity Generation

AIGC technology has unleashed tremendous innovation potential in the field of IP image design. In addressing the homogeneity and lack of innovation in IP image design, AIGC technology deeply explores the individual characteristics of IP images, endowing them with unique charm. By learning and analyzing a large number of different styles of artworks, it breaks away from the traditional framework of cartoon or animation design and creates IP images that are both innovative and distinctive. Moreover, the dynamic learning and creation capabilities of AIGC mean that it can continuously update and iterate IP images, avoiding consumer fatigue from a single image. This enables brands to continuously attract consumers' attention, opening up a vibrant and sustainable innovative path for IP image design.

5.2. Rapid Iteration

With the support of AIGC technology, the Stable Diffusion model can efficiently train and iterate to update and optimize IP images. A high-performance AI model has been developed that can generate diverse content such as text, images, and audio based on user customized requirements. In terms of efficiency, AIGC technology, through its automated functions, significantly shortens the cycle from initial concept to final design, allowing design teams to quickly produce multiple schemes and rapidly iterate and adjust. This is particularly important for internet brands, especially in the fierce market competition, where they can respond quickly and seize the initiative. In contrast, the traditional design process may take weeks or even months to complete, while AIGC technology can shorten this process to days or even hours.

In terms of consistency and scalability in design, another advantage of AIGC technology lies in its ability to learn and follow the brand's visual language, ensuring consistency in design across different application scenarios. At the same time, AI-designed IP images have high adaptability and scalability, capable of easily transcending platform limitations and adapting to the needs of various media. This enables brands to maintain the coherence and attractiveness of their image in diverse markets.

5.3. Interactive Upgrade

AIGC technology is revolutionizing traditional IP images, transforming them into highly interactive virtual digital images. In the digital age, the design of virtual digital images requires an innovative design method. This method not only needs to be able to quickly adapt to changing trends, such as diversity in clothing, actions, and styles, but also needs to accurately reflect users' personalities and preferences within a short period of time. The traditional process of virtual digital image design is often a lengthy and costly process, involving complex modeling, texture creation, and animation processes, which often require a lot of manual operations and professional knowledge. However, with the rapid development of AIGC technology, we can now use machine learning and deep learning algorithms to complete these tasks at unprecedented speed and accuracy.

Through AIGC technology, designers can quickly generate and modify models, significantly reducing time and cost investment. The data processing capabilities of AIGC further deepen designers' understanding of user needs and preferences,

ensuring that virtual characters have unique and personalized traits. Additionally, AIGC technology demonstrates its potential in the dynamic performance of virtual characters. It can analyze and imitate the movements and expressions of real actors, creating lifelike animation effects, making the behavior and reactions of virtual characters more smooth and realistic. These technological advancements not only improve the overall quality of virtual characters but also bring a more immersive and realistic interactive experience for users. Starting from the core idea of the mobile internet thinking, it is necessary to provide users with excellent services in multiple aspects, on multiple terminals, and across multiple platforms [10]. The AIGC technology is redefining the design and production process of virtual digital images, opening up new dimensions for the interaction between brands and users, and making virtual characters not just cold digital models, but vivid characters that can generate emotional resonance with users.

6. Conclusions

This study takes the design process of the “Musical Monster” Internet music brand IP image as an example, deeply analyzing how AIGC technology effectively addresses the challenges faced by current Internet brand IP images. The intervention of AIGC technology not only greatly enriches the presentation form of IP images, accelerates the update and iteration of the image, but also gives new vitality and possibilities to the design through the human-machine co-creation method. Looking forward to the future, AIGC technology will continue to play an important role in brand IP design. With the continuous development and improvement of technology, we can believe that AIGC technology will promote technological innovation in content generation, form a multi-layer industrial ecosystem, and be widely applied in content creation, personalized recommendation, and intelligent customer service, etc. At the same time, it will also lead new aesthetic trends, redefine our understanding of beauty, not only in visual art, but also in music, literature, and other fields. When people look up at the stars again, AIGC will become a bridge connecting human imagination and the real world, opening a new era of exploring unknown fields.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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