

SWOT Analysis of the Innovative Development of Museums in Weifang, China



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ABSTRACT: As an integral facet of urban culture, museums act as guardians to showcase our historical and cultural heritage and embody the profound soft power that enriches urban identity. Weifang, an important prefecture-level city in Shandong Province, has many historical and cultural resources. In light of the rapid expansion of the cultural industry, museum development in Weifang has made remarkable advancements in recent years. Nevertheless, amid intensifying competition within the cultural marketplace, discovering pathways for the museum's innovative development has emerged as an urgent challenge warranting our focused attention. This paper utilizes the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis framework to delve into the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with innovative museum development in Weifang while proposing relevant countermeasures and recommendations to foster sustainable growth for museums within this vibrant city.

KEYWORDS: Weifang; Museum; Innovative development; SWOT analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

As an essential palace for protecting and inheriting human civilization, museums bridge the past, present and future [1-3]. In recent years, with the cultural industry's rapid development and the people's growing demand for spiritual culture, museums have ushered in unprecedented development opportunities [4-5]. As an important city in the Shandong Peninsula city cluster, Weifang has rich cultural resources and historical deposits, providing unique conditions for museum development.

By April 30, 2024, Weifang has 62 museums of various types. These museums cover multiple fields, including history, culture, art, and science and technology, showcasing rich local features and cultural depth. Regarding spatial distribution, museums in Weifang exhibit an uneven distribution with multiple concentration centres (Figure 1). For example, some large comprehensive museums in the central city area display local historical relics and regularly hold various temporary exhibitions to attract more tourists and citizens. Additionally, specialized smaller museums tend to cluster around specific industries or themes—such as agriculture and handicrafts—typically situated in regions where these related sectors are well-developed.

However, in the development process, museums in Weifang face challenges and constraints that can hinder their growth and effectiveness [6]. These challenges include limited financial resources, which restrict the ability to invest in new exhibitions, educational programs, and technological advancements. Additionally, there may be a lack of trained personnel with the necessary skills to manage modern museum operations effectively. Furthermore, competition from other cultural institutions and entertainment options can divert public interest from museums. This situation is compounded by insufficient marketing strategies that fail to promote museum offerings to diverse audiences adequately. The physical infrastructure of some museums may also require upgrades or renovations to meet contemporary standards for accessibility and visitor engagement. Moreover, collaboration with local communities and schools might not be fully realized due to varying levels of awareness about the value of museums as educational resources. As a result, these factors collectively pose significant obstacles that need addressing for Weifang's museums to thrive within an increasingly competitive cultural landscape.

Therefore, this work adopts the SWOT analysis model to comprehensively analyze the internal and external conditions of the museum's innovative development in Weifang to put forward scientific development strategies and practical guidance. SWOT analysis is a strategic management tool to assess a project, organization, or individual's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and

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challenges. By evaluating these four aspects, SWOT analysis helps decision-makers better understand the current situation and potential of the project or organization and formulate corresponding strategies and action plans [7-10].

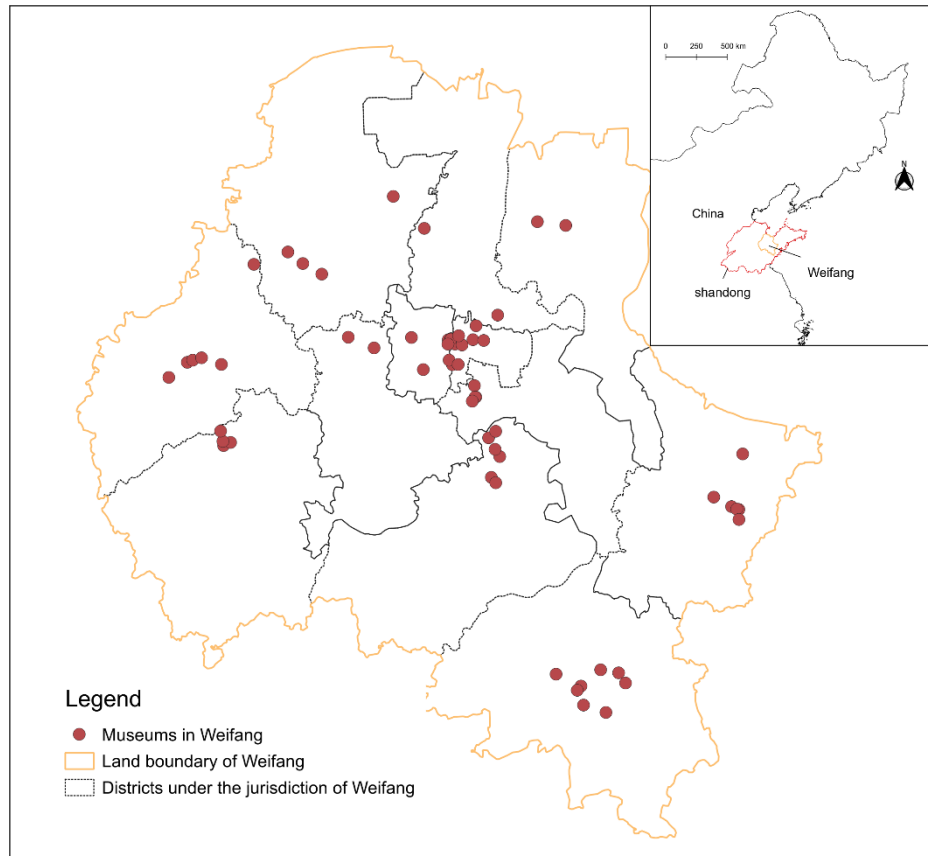


Figure 1: The Distribution of Museums in Weifang, China

II. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

A. Strengths

1) There Is a Prosperous Cultural Heritage: Weifang has rich cultural resources and historical deposits, which provide a solid foundation for the development of museums. Weifang has many immovable cultural relics and cultural relics in collections, including national and provincial cultural relics protection units and many historical relics and works of art with local characteristics (Table 1). These cultural resources not only provide rich materials for the exhibition and display of the museum but also provide a strong guarantee for the cultural connotation and attraction of the museums [6, 11].

2) The Brand Building Has Begun to Bear Fruit: Weifang has made some achievements in constructing the museum brand. In recent years, Weifang's Museum has continuously enhanced its popularity and influence by strengthening academic research, improving exhibition quality and enriching cultural activities [12-13]. At the same time, Weifang also actively introduces excellent exhibition projects and technical means at home and abroad to enhance the museum's exhibition level and cultural connotation. These efforts have laid a good brand foundation for the museum's innovative development of Weifang (Table 1).

3) The Substantial Support Provided by a Robust Economic Foundation: Weifang, an important city in the Shandong Peninsula city cluster, has strong economic strength, providing solid financial support for the museum's innovative development [11-12]. With the rapid growth of Weifang's economy and the acceleration of the urbanization process, the people's demand for spiritual culture is growing daily, providing a broad development space and market potential for museums. At the same time, the Weifang Municipal government also attaches great importance to the development of the cultural industry, increases the investment and support for the museum, and provides a good policy environment and financial guarantee for the innovative development of museums (Table 1).

B. Weaknesses

1) The Internal Structure of the Industry Is Unreasonable: There are unreasonable phenomena in the internal structure of the museum development in Weifang. Currently, the investment of cultural enterprises in Weifang is mainly limited to traditional and low-end cultural industries, and there is a severe homogenization phenomenon. For example, problems such as the similarity of souvenirs in scenic spots and the single service products are more prominent. This unreasonable industrial structure limits the

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overall benefit and competitiveness of the museum's innovative development and fails to meet the people's demand for diversified and high-quality cultural products (Table 1).

2) The Cultural Connotation Is Not Explored Enough: The museums in Weifang need to be strengthened regarding cultural connotation excavation. Although Weifang has rich cultural resources and historical deposits, the existing museum projects are not deep enough to excavate the connotation of resources. Some museums lack innovation and features in exhibition and display, making it challenging to attract the attention and interest of the audience [6]. At the same time, some museums have deficiencies in cultural communication and educational functions, making it difficult to fully play their role as an important carrier of cultural inheritance and development (Table 1).

3) There Is a Shortage of High-End Talent: There is a shortage of high-end talent in the museum's innovative development of Weifang. With the rapid growth of the museum and the people's growing demand for spiritual culture, the demand for museum professionals is becoming increasingly urgent. However, at present, the cultural industry talent team in Weifang cannot meet the requirements of the rapid development of the industry in terms of quantity, structure and level. In particular, the lack of senior management and innovation talents who understand management can develop and operate well, as well as senior management talents who can integrate cultural resources, industrial capital, and financial capital, restricts the overall level and competitiveness of the museum's innovative development (Table 1).

C. Opportunities

1) The Government Prioritizes Cultural Industries: In recent years, the Weifang Municipal government has attached great importance to developing the cultural sector and regards it as an essential starting point for promoting economic transformation, upgrading, and improving quality and efficiency. The government has issued a series of policies and measures to increase investment and support for the development of the cultural industry, providing a good policy environment and market opportunities for the innovative development of museums. At the same time, the government actively promotes the integrated development of the cultural industry with tourism, education, and other sectors, which provides a broader development space and market potential for the innovative development of museums (Table 1) [6, 11].

2) The Potential Market Demand Is Enormous: With people's growing demand for spiritual culture and the acceleration of consumption upgrading, the market demand for cultural industries is constantly expanding (Table 1). As an important city in the Shandong Peninsula city cluster, Weifang has a considerable consumer group and strong market demand. That provides a broad market space and growth potential for the innovative development of museums. At the same time, with the rapid development of tourism and the diversification of people's travel modes, Weifang Museum is also facing more tourists and audience resources, which provides more development opportunities for the innovative development of museums [12].

3) The Country Opens Up to the Outside World: With the continuous improvement of the country's opening to the outside world and the deepening of the "Belt and Road" initiative, the museum's innovative development in Weifang faces more opportunities for international cooperation and exchange. Weifang can actively introduce foreign advanced museum management ideas and technical means to improve the museum's exhibition level and cultural connotation. At the same time, it can strengthen cooperation and exchanges with foreign museums, jointly plan and hold cross-border exhibitions and activities, and enhance the international visibility and influence of the museums in Weifang (Table 1).

D. Threats

1) Fierce Competition in Surrounding Towns: The museum's innovative development in Weifang faces fierce competition from the surrounding towns. With the rapid growth of the cultural industry and the growing demand of the people for spiritual culture, the surrounding towns have also increased their investment and support for the museum [6]. Some cities have achieved remarkable results in museum construction, exhibition quality, cultural activities and other aspects, which has put a certain competitive pressure on the museum's innovative development in Weifang (Table 1).

2) The Impact of Foreign Culture: With the acceleration of globalization and the popularization and application of the Internet, foreign culture has a specific impact on the museum's innovative development of Weifang. Through advanced management ideas and technical means, some foreign museums have improved their exhibition level and cultural connotation, attracting the attention and participation of many visitors and tourists. At the same time, some foreign cultural products also enter the Chinese market through the Internet and other channels, which impacts explicitly the cultural products and market share of museums in Weifang (Table 1).

3) The Fund Is Tight, and the Investment Structure Is Low-End: There is a shortage of funds in the museum's innovative development of Weifang. Due to a lack of funds, it is difficult for some museums to carry out high-quality exhibitions and cultural activities [6]. At the same time, some museums are low-end in terms of investment structure and lack input and support for high-end cultural industry projects. The shortage of funds and the low-end investment structure limit the overall benefits and

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competitiveness of the museum's innovative development and make it challenging to meet the people's demand for diversified and high-quality cultural products (Table 1).

III. STRATEGIC SUGGESTIONS

A. Accelerate the Construction of Characteristic Museum Development Pattern

1) Promote the Development of Comprehensive State-Owned Museums: Weifang should enhance the development and management of state-owned comprehensive museums to elevate their exhibition standards and cultural significance. These institutions' overall capacity and competitiveness must be bolstered through increased investment, improved infrastructure, and the integration of advanced technological methodologies. Simultaneously, it is imperative to strengthen these museums' oversight and evaluation processes (Table 1).

2) Cultivate and Develop Non-State-Owned Museums: Weifang should cultivate and advance non-state-owned museums while encouraging the engagement of social entities in museum initiatives. By implementing preferential policies and providing financial incentives, it is essential to guide private capital towards investment in museum development and management. Concurrently, enhancing the oversight and regulation of non-state-owned museums is crucial to ensure their adherence to relevant laws and standards (Table 1).

3) Prioritize the Development of Museum-Like Venues: Weifang should actively promote the incubation and cultivation of museum-like venues and strengthen the cultivation and support of emerging cultural formats. By maintaining the planning guidance and policy support for the cultural industry, the city should promote the rapid development and expansion of the museum. At the same time, the supervision and evaluation of such museums should also be strengthened to ensure that they meet the relevant regulations and standards (Table 1).

Table 1. SWOT Matrix Analysis of The Museum Innovative Development in Weifang

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	S1: There is a prosperous cultural heritage. S2: The brand building has begun to bear fruit. S3: The substantial support provided by a robust economic foundation.	W1: The internal structure of the industry is unreasonable. W2: The cultural connotation is not explored enough. W3: There is a shortage of high-end talent.
OPPORTUNITIES	STRENGTHS + OPPORTUNITIES	WEAKNESSES + OPPORTUNITIES
O1: The government prioritizes cultural industries. O2: The potential market demand is enormous. O3: The country opens up to the outside world.	S1.S2.O1.O2.O3: Accelerate the construction of characteristic museum development patterns, such as promoting the development of comprehensive state-owned museums, cultivating and developing non-state-owned museums, and prioritizing the development of museum-like venues.	W1.W2.O1.O2: Make every effort to improve the level of public services, such as planning and launching quality exhibitions, promoting the informatization of museum resource management, and strengthening social education and cultural communication.
THREATS	STRENGTHS + THREATS	WEAKNESSES + THREATS
T1: Fierce competition in surrounding towns. T2: The impact of foreign culture. T3: The fund is tight, and the investment structure is low-end.	S3.T1.T3: Expand financing channels and fund guarantees, such as increasing government input, expanding social financing channels, and exploring diversified profit models.	W2.W3.T3: Strengthen the training and introduction of talents, such as cultivating a contingent of professional personnel, introducing high-end talents, and establishing a talent incentive mechanism.

B. Make Every Effort to Improve the Level of Museum Public Services

1) Plan and Launch Quality Exhibitions: Museums in Weifang should strengthen the planning and launching of exhibition projects to improve the quality and level of exhibitions. By digging deeply and displaying Weifang's cultural heritage and historical stories, we should create exhibition projects with local characteristics. Simultaneously, it would be beneficial to strengthen

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exchanges and cooperation with domestic and international museums, introduce outstanding exhibition projects and technical resources, and enhance exhibitions' quality and cultural significance (Table 1).

2) Promote the Informatization of Museum Resource Management: Museums in Weifang should enhance the management of resources and the development of information systems. We can effectively manage and utilize cultural relics resources by establishing a comprehensive cultural relics resource library and a digital management system. Additionally, it is important to promote the development of digital products for museums, improve their quality and standards, and cater to the community's diverse needs (Table 1).

3) Strengthen Social Education and Cultural Communication: Museums should enhance their role in social education and cultural communication. By organizing various social and educational activities and cultural exchange programs, museums can increase their popularity and influence. Additionally, it is essential to strengthen cooperation and collaboration with schools, communities, and other institutions to promote the outreach and expansion of museum resources at the grassroots level (Table 1).

C. Strengthen the Training and Introduction of Talents

1) Cultivate a Contingent of Professional Personnel: Weifang should strengthen the training of museum professionals. Through cooperation with universities, research institutions and other ways to carry out personnel training programs, cultivate a group of museum talents with professional quality and innovative ability. It is imperative to enhance existing talents' training and education to elevate their professional competence and overall capability (Table 1).

2) Introduce High-end Talents: Weifang should actively introduce high-end talents at home and abroad to provide a talent guarantee for the innovative development of museums. By introducing preferential policies and providing a good working environment, Weifang should attract more high-end talents to engage in the museum business. At the same time, the assessment and management of introduced talents should be enhanced to ensure they fulfil their expected roles and maximize their potential value (Table 1).

3) Establish a Talent Incentive Mechanism: Weifang should establish a perfect museum talent incentive mechanism to stimulate the enthusiasm and creativity of talents. By setting up reward funds and providing promotion opportunities, talents should be encouraged to innovate and develop in the museum career. At the same time, efforts should be intensified to provide care and support for talents, fostering an excellent working atmosphere and cultural environment (Table 1).

D. Expand Financing Channels and Fund Guarantee

1) Increase Government Input: Weifang should increase the investment in the museum cause and improve the government's support for the museum's innovative development. By setting up special funds and providing financial subsidies, the city should give financial guarantees for the construction and management of the museum. Enhancing the supervision and evaluation of fund utilization is imperative to ensure their effective allocation and maximize the resultant benefits (Table 1).

2) Expand Social Financing Channels: Weifang should actively introduce high-end talents at home and abroad to provide a talent guarantee for the innovative development of museums. By introducing preferential policies and providing a good working environment, Weifang should attract more high-end talents to engage in the museum business. Simultaneously, the assessment and management of introduced talents should be enhanced to ensure they fulfil their expected roles and maximize their potential contributions (Table 1).

3) Explored Diversified Profit Models: Museums in Weifang should actively explore diversified profit models to improve their profitability. It should increase its income sources by developing cultural and creative products, holding cultural activities and providing customized services. Internet technology can be used to carry out new businesses, such as online exhibitions and online education, to expand museums' market space and profit channels (Table 1).

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS

Through the SWOT analysis of the innovative development of museums in Weifang, this paper comprehensively analyses its internal and external conditions and development opportunities and challenges. Weifang has rich cultural resources and historical deposits, providing unique conditions for the museum's innovative development. However, it also faces some challenges and constraints in the development process. This paper proposes countermeasures to promote the smooth museum innovative development in Weifang, such as strengthening resource integration and sharing, improving service quality and cultural connotation, and expanding financing channels and fund guarantees.

The innovative development of museums in Weifang will show a more diversified and integrated trend. On the one hand, with the rapid growth of the cultural industry and the increasing demand of the people for spiritual culture, Weifang Museum will pay more attention to improving service quality and cultural connotation, providing more personalized and customized services to

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meet the diversified needs of the audience. On the other hand, museums in Weifang will strengthen the exchanges and cooperation with domestic and foreign museums, promote the effective integration and sharing of resources, and improve overall efficiency and competitiveness. At the same time, with the continuous development and innovation of science and technology, Weifang Museum will actively explore the application and promotion of new technologies and new means in museums to provide visitors with a more convenient, efficient and intelligent cultural experience.

To sum up, the museum's innovative development in Weifang has broad prospects for growth and huge market potential. By implementing strategies such as strengthening resource integration and sharing, improving service quality and cultural connotation, expanding financing channels and fund security, museums in Weifang will continuously enhance their visibility and influence and provide a more colourful cultural experience and spiritual enjoyment for the people.

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