



A CASE STUDY OF A THAI START-UP'S JEWELRY MARKET ENTRY VIA CHINESE
TIKTOK



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A CASE STUDY OF A THAI START-UP'S JEWELRY MARKET ENTRY VIA CHINESE
TIKTOK



An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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THE INDEPENDENT STUDY TITLED
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BY
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This study explores how Thai jewelry startups leverage the Chinese version of TikTok to address key challenges in cross-border marketing, particularly breaking the homogenization of the “Buddhist amulet narrative” and addressing long-standing consumer trust issues. The study employs a mixed-methods approach centered on structured questionnaires, combined with descriptive statistics to explore user engagement with cultural content, purchasing behavior, and trust processes. The findings indicate that the Chinese version of TikTok plays a pivotal role in reshaping consumers' perceptions of Thai jewelry. By disseminating diverse cultural content, the platform effectively breaks down the cognitive bias that equates Thai jewelry solely with religious symbols. Cultural uniqueness emerged as the core driver of consumer interest, with narrative content focusing on cultural heritage and design stories resonating strongly with users, highlighting the importance of cultural narratives in stimulating purchasing intent. Official accounts also emerged as key anchors of consumer confidence. A comparative analysis with Instagram revealed that TikTok outperforms in terms of user engagement and follower growth, attributed to its interest-based algorithm aligning with users' preferences for cultural content. This study highlights that a “diverse cultural content matrix” and a “hybrid trust system” are key to the success of Thai jewelry entering the Chinese market. These insights provide practical strategies for niche cultural products in the interest-driven e-commerce era, emphasizing the synergistic relationship between cultural value transmission and trust mechanism construction.

Keyword : <p>Cultural Content Marketing, Cross-border Social Commerce, trust Mechanism, Thai Jewelry</p>

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When I type this line, I have finally realized concretely that my student days are coming to an end. This period started in September 2023 and will end in July 2025. This year, I am 25 years old.

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My final tribute to those who know I am imperfect but still love me.

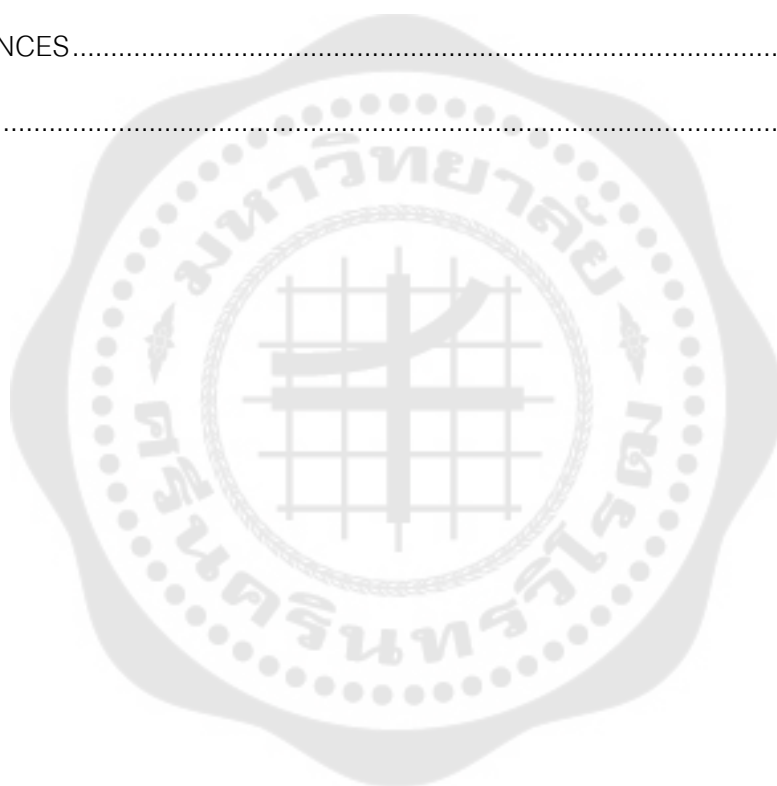
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1. Thailand as a Preferred Destination for Chinese Tourists

Thailand has long been one of the most popular travel destinations in the worldwide. Tourism plays a key role in the country's economy. Among international visitors, Chinese tourists have consistently been a major support for Thailand's tourism industry. By December 8, 2024, more than 6.3 million Chinese tourists have visited Thailand. China once again became the largest source of tourists to the country. In the first five months of 2025 (January to May), Thailand received 14,362,694 foreign visitors, and Chinese tourists remained the largest group, reaching 1,958,939 visitors.

Culture is one of the main reasons why Chinese tourists choose to visit Thailand(Liang & Zuo, 2022). From its deep Buddhist traditions to its exotic tropical landscapes, along with attractive shopping experiences, Thailand offers a multi-layered travel experience. For Chinese tourists, Thailand is both a place to explore diverse cultures and a destination to meet various consumer needs. This mix of cultural richness and shopping appeal gives Thailand strong competitiveness in the international tourism market.

1.1.2. Shopping: A Core Part of the Travel Experience in Thailand

Shopping is an essential part of the travel experience for many Chinese tourists in Thailand. The country offers a wide range of unique and locally inspired products. Among them, jewelry is especially popular among them. Thailand's jewelry industry benefits from rich natural resources, such as gold and silver, and a long tradition of skilled craftsmanship. Thai jewelry often combines traditional methods with cultural symbols, such as Buddhist motifs, ethnic patterns, and designs inspired by nature. Because of this, the jewelry conveys a deep cultural meaning. For Chinese tourists, Thai jewelry is more than just decoration; it is seen as a meaningful "cultural token" that represents Thailand's identity. Whether they buy it as a souvenir, an investment, or a collectible, Thai jewelry has strong appeal and emotional significance

for visitors. This demand isn't limited to physical stores. As types of stories, not just religious ones, the aim is to help Thai jewelry reach more Chinese consumers and be loved by more users.

1.1.3. The Shift in Global Shopping Trends

In the Chinese market, short video platforms have become the core medium driving consumer decision-making, with Chinese TikTok being a typical representative of the 'interest-driven e-commerce' model. In recent years, global shopping behavior has undergone significant changes. This transformation has been primarily driven by digital tools, social media, and mobile platforms.

Today, consumers rely less on physical stores or traditional e-commerce websites and instead turn to social media for product discovery, inspiration, and reading reviews. They often watch short videos or live streams before making a purchase. This trend is particularly pronounced in China, where short video platforms and live-streamed shopping have become primary shopping channels. Chinese TikTok employs a model where content serves as advertising, seamlessly blending entertainment, cultural narratives, and product promotion. Its algorithm recommends products based on user interests, thereby increasing conversion rates and shortening the time from discovery to purchase. This shopping approach, known as 'interest-driven e-commerce,' is transforming how Chinese tourists shop abroad.

Before travelling, many Chinese users search for keywords on Chinese TikTok or similar platforms, such as 'must-buy list in Thailand,' 'Thai jewelry recommendations,' or 'Bangkok shopping guide.' They plan their shopping lists in advance by watching user-generated videos. During their trips, they also share experiences, post product reviews, or go live to showcase their purchasing process. This 'UGC + social trust' model helps promote culturally significant products with local characteristics and traditional values, especially those reflecting local identity.

1.2. Statement of the Research Problem

1.2.1 Chinese tourists lack reliable sources of information to access authentic Thai jewelry.

As Chinese tourists become increasingly interested in cross-border consumption, Thai jewelry has enormous market potential. However, there is a significant information gap between China and Thailand, which poses a major obstacle for Chinese tourists seeking authentic Thai jewelry. In China, the lack of official channels and transparent pricing makes it difficult for tourists to judge the authenticity and value of products. On the other hand, in Thailand, language barriers and cultural differences further hinder the establishment of trust and effective decision-making. Due to the uncertainty of offline channels, an increasing number of Chinese consumers are turning to online platforms to search for relevant information.

1.2.2. Chinese tourists rely on online searches, but most content focuses on Buddha amulets, leading to biased perceptions.

For Chinese consumers, it is difficult to obtain offline information, so many Chinese tourists search for Thai jewelry on social media platforms. However, on Chinese TikTok, content related to 'Thai jewelry' is largely focused on religious items, particularly Buddhist amulets. This narrow and repetitive content structure has led to cognitive biases among Chinese consumers. Over time, many Chinese tourists have begun to associate all Thai jewelry with religious symbols, thereby overlooking the broader cultural richness of Thai jewelry, such as ethnic design heritage, traditional craftsmanship, and cultural narratives. This has weakened Chinese consumers' motivation to explore non-amulet categories of jewelry and limited the space for cultural exchange.

1.2.3. Unverifiable content increases concerns about fake products and overpriced goods, leading to long-term distrust.

The authenticity of content on social media is often hard to verify. Many Chinese tourists worry about fake products and overpriced items. Some influencer videos exaggerate product features or promote low-quality imitations. Real consumer experiences are rarely presented transparently. Over time, this results in a cycle of

distrust and misinformation. Negative reviews and warning posts spread across platforms, further discouraging Chinese Tourists from engaging with Thai jewelry. This ongoing lack of trust not only limits consumer interest in diverse jewelry types but also harms the overall brand image and cultural value of Thai jewelry in the Chinese market. This crisis of trust essentially reflects a breakdown in the “information-cognition-decision-making” chain in cross-cultural consumption, which needs to be resolved through the reconstruction of precise content strategies and trust mechanisms.

Considering that college students are an emerging force in cross-border consumption and that their information acquisition habits and consumption decision-making patterns are representative, this study sets its target group as Chinese university students in Thailand.

1.3. Research gap

First, in terms of the mechanism of digital content dissemination and cultural cognition, academia has not systematically studied the negative impact of cultural content on Chinese TikTok on niche cultural products like Thai jewelry. Current research mostly focuses on the role of TikTok in mass consumer goods marketing, but ignores the particularity of the platform in shaping perceptions of cross-border cultural products. Especially in the field of Thai jewelry, Chinese TikTok content is overly concentrated on Buddha amulet culture. Whether this single-minded communication model causes Chinese tourists to have cognitive shielding of the diverse cultural values of Thai jewelry, as well as the resulting cultural misunderstandings and consumption decision biases, there is still a lack of empirical research.

Second, in terms of constructing cross-border marketing strategies, the Thai jewelry industry has not established a strategic, culture-oriented content marketing system tailored to the characteristics of the Chinese TikTok platform. Existing research mostly discusses online marketing of cultural products at a macro level, lacking targeted analysis of TikTok's "algorithm recommendation - user interaction - content dissemination" ecosystem. The Thai jewelry industry has neither designed differentiated content delivery strategies based on platform algorithm characteristics nor transformed

cultural elements such as the historical heritage and ethnic craftsmanship behind jewelry into narrative symbols that conform to the cognitive habits of Chinese consumers. This has made it difficult to break through the monopoly of Buddha amulet content in information dissemination, missing opportunities to reach diverse consumer groups.

Third, in terms of trust building and consumption decision optimization, the Thai jewelry industry has not developed tiered, culturally adapted content marketing strategies for the Chinese TikTok platform. Current research pays little attention to how to reduce consumers' information verification costs and decision-making risks through content innovation in cross-border consumption scenarios. Specifically for Thai jewelry, the industry has neither used Chinese TikTok's live streaming, short-video and other functions to build a mixed trust guarantee mechanism of "official certification + user-generated content", nor designed differentiated content for different consumption needs (religious believers and fashion enthusiasts). This has led to a trust crisis among consumers due to difficulties in distinguishing the authenticity of information, suppressing purchasing willingness.

1.4. Research Question

1.4.1. How can Thai jewelry brands use Chinese TikTok to create cultural content that moves beyond the usual "Buddha amulet" theme and shows a wider range of Thai cultural values?

At the level of content marketing strategy, aiming at the dilemma of "homogenized Buddha amulet content" faced by Thai jewelry on the Chinese TikTok platform, it is necessary to explore which "strategic, culture-oriented" content marketing models can be constructed. This question focuses on how to break through the single narrative of religious symbols. It explores the diverse cultural values such as the craftsmanship inheritance and ethnic design of Thai jewelry, and designs a content matrix (such as cultural story short videos, craftsman live broadcasts, etc.) that adapts to the algorithm characteristics of Chinese TikTok, so as to guide Chinese university students in Thailand to form a comprehensive understanding of Thai jewelry.

1.4.2. How can cultural storytelling on TikTok challenge existing user stereotypes about Thai jewelry and influence their purchasing intentions?

At the level of cultural cognition influence, it is necessary to clarify how Chinese TikTok content centered on cultural promotion changes the stereotype of Chinese university students in Thailand that Thai jewelry is "only related to Buddha amulets" by showing the historical origin and craftsmanship aesthetics of Thai jewelry, and finally promotes purchasing behavior. This question focuses on the mechanism of short-video content reshaping cross-cultural cognition, and focuses on analyzing the influence path of cultural narrative elements (such as craftsmanship documentaries, design inspiration interpretation) on consumption decisions.

1.4.3. How can brands use TikTok's interactive tools to build trust by combining official information with user-generated content, and help reduce users' worries about product authenticity?

At the level of trust system construction, it is necessary to explore how the Thai jewelry industry can build a "hybrid trust system" of "official certification + user-generated content" by using the interactive functions of Chinese TikTok (such as live authentication, blockchain traceability visualization), so as to reduce Chinese university students in Thailand' concerns about counterfeit goods. This question directly addresses the pain point of information asymmetry in cross-border consumption, and focuses on how technology empowerment (such as real-time authentication live broadcast) and content strategies (such as user evaluation aggregation) work together to improve information credibility and promote rational purchasing decisions.

1.5. Research Objectives

1.5.1 Exploring Chinese TikTok's Potential to Reshape Consumer Perceptions of Thai Jewelry

The first objective is to find out if Chinese TikTok can help reshape how Chinese consumers think about Thai jewelry. Right now, many Chinese consumers think of Thai jewelry only as religious amulets. This objective wants to help Chinese people know Thai jewelry's cultural meaning and craft value. Past research mostly focused on

religious symbols, which makes it hard for Chinese Consumers to understand the full story behind Thai jewelry. This objective will look at whether cultural content on Chinese TikTok can help change this view. The aim is to help users see Thai jewelry as something that shows history, ethnic design, and modern beauty. By doing this, the objective is to move away from only talking about religious themes and help Chinese consumers understand Thai jewelry in a deeper and more complete way.

1.5.2. Building a Culture-Based Content Strategy for Chinese TikTok

The second objective is to make a better content plan for Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok. It tries to solve the problem of too many videos only talking about religious items. This objective looks at how TikTok works — how its algorithm and users behave — and then creates content that mixes Thai architecture, handcraft skills, and history with modern video storytelling. The objective wants to turn these cultural elements into interesting short videos that fit Chinese TikTok's style. The objective is to make content that not only helps more Chinese consumers see the brand, but also helps them feel a stronger connection to the culture. By showing different

1.5.3 Establishing a Hybrid Trust Mechanism via Chinese TIKTOK's Interactive Ecosystem

The third objective looks at the trust problem in cross-border jewelry buying. It uses Chinese TikTok's interactive tools to build a strong trust system. Buying from another country often brings doubts, like worries about whether the product is real or good. This objective focuses on how to fix that problem inside Chinese TikTok. The objective will look at how to mix official tools (like brand live streaming and clear product info) with user content (like reviews and shared videos). It will also use Chinese TikTok tools such as Q&A, comments, and group activities to get more users involved. The final aim is to build a system where people trust both the brand and other users. This objective will help reduce worry, build confidence, and help Chinese consumers feel safer and smarter when buying Thai jewelry online. Digital technology becomes more popular, the way people buy and experience Thai jewelry is changing significantly.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. E-commerce

E-commerce refers to a business model that conducts the buying, selling, payment, and transaction activities of goods or services through the internet. It breaks temporal and geographical constraints, enabling consumers and businesses to complete transactions online. E-commerce requires companies to establish internet connectivity and adopt information technologies such as electronic data interchange (EDI). It involves merchant websites that directly transact goods or services with users through the platform. Payment gateways utilize digital shopping carts or baskets, processing transactions via credit cards, debit cards or electronic transfers(Jain et al., 2021).

From a communication perspective, electronic commerce (EC) enables the transfer of information, services, products, or online payments via telephone lines, computer networks, or other communication means. From a business process perspective, EC leverages technological tools to automate corporate transactions and workflows. From a service perspective, EC serves as a method to reduce service costs, enhance production efficiency, and accelerate service delivery, aligning with the needs of industries, customers, and management. From an online accessibility perspective, EC provides services for online shopping and the distribution of goods and information through the internet and other online resources. With the widespread adoption and rapid advancement of the internet and network technologies, electronic commerce has become a critical domain for contemporary enterprises(Jain et al., 2021).

From the consumer perspective, the primary benefits of e-commerce lie in significantly improved efficiency, substantial time savings, and convenient global accessibility. Customers can place orders anytime. Specifically: 1) It eliminates temporal and spatial limitations, enabling 24/7 shopping where users can purchase global products anytime via mobile devices; 2) It saves time and effort through fast transactions and efficient delivery; 3) It facilitates price comparisons, with abundant

information and options helping users select cost-effective products; 4) It offers operational convenience through quick product searches and easy access to purchase history(Dolfen et al., 2023).

From the merchant perspective, e-commerce's main advantages include increased sales and reduced operational/maintenance costs through internet platforms. These encompass: 1) Revenue generation; 2) Significant reduction in operational and maintenance costs; 3) Lower procurement costs; 4) Enhanced customer loyalty and retention; 5) Substantial reduction in product shipping budgets; 6) Improved customer-supplier relationships; 7) Accelerated sales processes; 8) Better internal and external communication; 9) Enhanced corporate and brand image(Jain et al., 2021).

The proliferation of e-commerce has become a core driver of the global economy, restructuring commercial ecosystems through its "online transactions + logistics network" model. Small and medium brands can now directly reach consumers through e-commerce platforms, weakening traditional retail channels' monopolistic positions. In addition, e-commerce has facilitated the cross-regional circulation of cultural commodities. For example, Thai jewelry has entered the Chinese market through online platforms, enabling consumers to access these products and the cultural symbols behind them, thereby objectively promoting cultural exchanges between China and Thailand. E-commerce has changed the global trade landscape, with the B2C (business-to-consumer) model becoming an important driving force for consumer-oriented transactions. This shift is particularly evident in cross-cultural marketing, as exemplified by the case of Thai jewelry entering the Chinese market.

2.2. B2C E-Commerce

2.2.1. Definition and Key Characteristics of B2C

B2C (Business to Customer) refers to a commercial model where enterprises directly provide products or services to end consumers(Kumar & Raheja, 2012). Its defining feature lies in the direct interaction between supply and demand—businesses reach consumers through online or offline channels to fulfill individual purchasing needs. In a typical B2C transaction, consumers complete purchases by

visiting corporate websites, while companies may earn sales commissions through referral links (Kumar & Raheja, 2012).

2.2.2. Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategies in B2C

B2C purchasing decisions exhibit distinct non-rational characteristics, with emotional factors often serving as key drivers. For instance, elements such as brand affinity and lifestyle associations conveyed through advertising tend to influence choices more than functional product details). Consequently, B2C marketing communications prioritize prompting immediate action, employing time-sensitive promotions and discount incentives to capture attention rapidly (Kitchen, 2017)

Compared to B2B models, B2C decision-making cycles are shorter and more dependent on personal preferences. B2C consumers place greater emphasis on instant gratification and emotional fulfillment (Rėklaitis & Pilelienė, 2019). This fundamental difference positions "prompting consumption behavior" as the central objective of B2C strategies.

2.2.3. The Role of social media in B2C

Social media platforms have emerged as pivotal B2C marketing channels. Consumers actively seek product information through forums and communities, creating low-cost word-of-mouth dissemination opportunities for businesses (Vilkaitė-Vaitonė, 2015). However, the issue of information overload on social media necessitates that firms balance targeting precision with cost efficiency. Future exploration should focus on leveraging artificial intelligence and other technologies to optimize channel-matching effectiveness.

2.2.4 Key factors driving the development of B2C

The implementation of B2C systems is primarily driven by three core factors: customer demand, commercial value, and pressure from technological change (Paris et al., 2016). Many customers seek to enhance their shopping experience through convenient transactions (Chan & Swatman, 2000). Commercial value is equally critical, as implementing B2C requires significant investment, with return on investment (ROI) and expected revenue serving as key decision-making metrics (Chan & Swatman, 2003). Additionally, the rapid evolution of B2C technology drives system upgrades,

necessitating consideration of compatibility and maintenance costs(Chan & Swatman, 2000).

These drivers have intensified with changes in market demand and consumer behavior. Modern consumers increasingly prefer online shopping, enjoying 24/7 convenience and door-to-door delivery services, particularly evident post-COVID-19. Growing demand for product diversity and personalized services has prompted businesses to leverage big data for targeted marketing. The rise of social media has also amplified word-of-mouth marketing, driving businesses to integrate sharing features to enhance purchase intent.

From a strategic perspective, B2C helps businesses overcome geographical limitations and reduce operational costs by optimizing digital supply chains and reducing physical store expenses to increase profits. It also enables businesses to collect valuable customer data to optimize products and services and enhance customer loyalty. The widespread adoption of the internet and mobile devices, along with improvements in payment and logistics systems, has lowered the barriers to entry for B2C, allowing businesses to enter the market at a lower cost and undertake operations such as website development, marketing, and data analysis.

2.3. Social media Marketing

In today's digital era, with the widespread adoption of the internet and the rapid development of social media platforms, social media has profoundly transformed our lives and changed how we interact with others and the world around us. Social media marketing has been applied across various industries, referring to the use of social media technologies, channels, and software to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange valuable offerings for an organization's stakeholders(Jacobson et al., 2020). Social media includes blogs, online forums, consumer review websites, and social networking sites (Twitter, Blogger, LinkedIn, and Facebook)(Jamil et al., 2022). Compared to traditional marketing platforms like print advertisements and billboards, social media as a marketing tool offers distinct appeal(Wibowo et al., 2020). Many brands have adopted social media marketing to adapt to this growing trend and

generate profits, as it offers numerous advantages such as driving customer traffic, improving customer loyalty and satisfaction, creating brand awareness, and building reputation.

The application of social media in e-commerce platforms. In the contemporary retail sector, the key role of social media marketing is both transformative and expansive. Digital transformation, characterized by large-scale internet adoption, has fundamentally changed how businesses interact with consumers, making SMM an indispensable tool in modern retailers' arsenal (Anjorin et al., 2024). On one hand, market segmentation based on social media data: social media platforms accumulate massive amounts of user data, which, combined with data mining technologies, enables in-depth analysis of users' interest graphs. Natural language processing algorithms are used to semantically analyze users' posts and comments, identifying topics, product categories, and brands of interest to users. Simultaneously, social media's tagging function is utilized for market segmentation. When users post content, they often use various tags that reflect their interests and focus areas. Businesses can collect and analyze tag data related to their products or services to provide better flexibility and customized services in response to changing trends and consumer preferences (Purnomo, 2023). On the other hand, identifying target markets and competitive positioning: based on the analysis of social media data, combined with a company's own product advantages and resource conditions, potential and competitive target markets are selected.

2.4. Content marketing

Content marketing, a subset of social media marketing, differs in that it focuses on driving narratives rather than direct promotion. Content marketing primarily involves creating valuable content to attract target users. By capturing the interest and attention of target users, it provides valuable information and knowledge rather than directly promoting products or services. Content marketing is delivered through various methods and the interest and attention of target users to provide valuable information and knowledge, rather than directly promoting products or services. Content marketing

is delivered through various methods and channels, such as social media, video, and email. (Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009) were the first to define it, stating that content marketing involves brands listening to consumer needs and accepting their useful suggestions to establish mutually dependent relationships and trust with consumers.

With the advent of the digital age, the concept of digital content marketing was introduced. (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019) defined digital content marketing as businesses using digital platforms to share brand-related content that is helpful to consumers with existing or potential consumers, thereby promoting consumer engagement and interaction. Emphasizes that content marketing in the digital age does not directly drive product sales but instead builds brand-consumer relationships through content, forming a 'recognition-resonance-co-creation' brand value relationship.

Content marketing differs from traditional marketing methods, emphasizing that it addresses consumers' doubts through diverse forms of expression, reducing their aversion, rather than interrupting their thoughts and senses to forcefully convey information. Content marketing differs from advertising's "push" strategy, instead employing a "pull" strategy, and distinguishes it from brand-embedded advertising, social media marketing, and online reputation marketing. Compared to traditional marketing methods, content marketing offers more distinct advantages. First, content marketing can address consumers' doubts through diverse forms of expression, reducing their aversion, rather than interrupting their thoughts and senses to forcefully convey information.

Second, content marketing can foster a sense of belonging among consumers

'push' strategy, but rather a "pull" strategy, and distinguishes it from brand-embedded advertising, social media marketing, and online word-of-mouth marketing. Compared to traditional marketing methods, content marketing has more prominent advantages. First, content marketing can increase platform traffic. When a brand posts valuable content on social media, people will use the platform's search engine to find your content, thereby driving traffic growth. Second, content marketing can enhance brand awareness. When brands publish valuable content, it attracts more target users to

the brand, helping to establish its brand image and further enhance brand awareness. Finally, content marketing can increase user purchase rates. By providing clear and concise marketing content, target users can better understand the brand's products or services, thereby stimulating their purchasing desire.

Through content marketing, brands can enhance brand awareness, establish brand image, and improve user conversion rates. Although these intangible values cannot be quantified numerically, they play a crucial role in the brand's long-term development.

In summary, providing valuable marketing content can attract the attention and trust of target users, while also enhancing brand awareness, increasing platform traffic, and boosting sales. Unlike traditional marketing methods, content marketing is highly effective and long-term, focusing more on long-term results and providing valuable information and knowledge to target users.

The most popular content marketing tool nowadays is short video, which is a form of video content with a short duration (usually within a few minutes, mostly a few seconds to a few minutes). Short video is defined as “a form of video in seconds, based on mobile smart terminals for rapid shooting and beautification editing, which can be shared in real time and seamlessly connected to social media platforms.” (Liu et al., 2019).

The content of short videos covers a variety of types such as life records, entertainment and funny, knowledge sharing, skills teaching, news information, etc., which can quickly convey information or emotions through streamlined images, sound effects, text and other elements, and satisfy users' needs for fragmented consumption, social sharing and personalized content acquisition. The creation and dissemination of short videos are usually accomplished with the help of mobile devices such as smartphones, and combined with the algorithmic recommendation mechanism, they can accurately reach the target audience and have become an important part of the current Internet content ecology.

The reason why short video has received extensive attention from scholars is mainly because of its important value to enterprise marketing activities. The role of short video is to enhance brand awareness and cultivate customer brand loyalty by establishing brand association, thus effectively enhancing the value of the brand itself. Compared with traditional videos, short videos are more interactive, so if you can effectively utilize short video marketing, it will promote brand building and dissemination. The rise of short videos expands the scenes where consumers watch videos, makes the information deeply interactive among consumers, and plays an important role in reconstructing consumer relationships.

Short videos are characterized by low production threshold, fast dissemination speed, fragmented content, and high interactivity (Yang et al., 2019). First, its production threshold is significantly lower than that of traditional video forms, users can complete shooting, editing, and adding special effects with the help of smartphones and simple editing tools, without professional equipment or complex processes, so that lightweight content such as ordinary people's record of their daily lives and sharing of their talents can be easily realized. Secondly, short videos rely on the platform's algorithmic recommendation mechanism to achieve rapid dissemination, through the analysis of user behavioral data to accurately push the content, combined with the ability to instantly respond to hot topics, high-quality content can form a viral proliferation in a short period of time.

In terms of content presentation, short videos are highly adapted to the fragmented life rhythm of modern users, and their length is usually controlled from a few seconds to a few minutes, focusing on a single theme (such as a knowledge point, an emotional expression or a product selling point), and delivering information with fast-paced editing, visual effects and strong emotional impact to meet the instant consumption needs of users in fragmented scenes such as commuting and lunch breaks. Finally, short videos build a strong interactive ecosystem, users are no longer limited to passive viewing, but through the likes, comments, sharing and other functions to interact directly with the creators, and even participate in the production of content

through co-productions, secondary creation and other ways to form a “creation - feedback - re-creation” of the two-way cycle.

2.5. Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model – Kevin Lane Keller

Building on the ‘pull strategy’ of content marketing, the CBBE model provides a theoretical framework for measuring how cultural narratives shape brand equity. Specifically, content marketing aligns with the CBBE pyramid’s ‘band meaning’ and ‘band response’ stages, where cultural stories drive consumer resonance (Keller, 1993).

Brand equity refers to the added value a brand brings to a product or service. This value is reflected in areas such as consumer awareness, market premium, and customer loyalty. In 1993, American marketing scholar Kevin Lane Keller proposed the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model. This model systematically explains how brand equity is formed and measured, and has become one of the most influential frameworks in brand research. The CBBE model sees brand value as rooted in consumer psychology. It argues that brand equity grows when consumers recognize a brand, associate it with specific attributes, and build emotional connections with it.

Marketing is essentially about meeting consumer needs better than competitors. The CBBE model reflects this idea. Unlike earlier brand equity studies that focused on financial indicators or market share, CBBE starts from the consumer’s mind. It defines brand equity as the “differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to brand marketing” (Keller, 1993). This shift from an external, business-led view to a consumer-centered view marked a turning point in brand equity research. It also led to a broader transformation in brand management—from company-driven strategies to customer-driven strategies.

The CBBE model is built in the form of a pyramid. It outlines four key stages in developing brand equity: brand identity, brand meaning, brand response, and brand relationships. These four stages include six building blocks: brand salience, performance, imagery, judgments, feelings, and resonance (Kuhn et al., 2008).

In practice, CBBE provides companies with measurable tools to manage brand equity. By analyzing consumer responses to dimensions like brand awareness, performance, and image, businesses can improve their marketing strategies more precisely. For example, a brand can use CBBE to overcome the problem of a rigid or outdated brand image. By enhancing brand identity, enriching cultural meaning, and activating emotional responses, brands can reshape how young consumers see them (Çifci et al., 2016).

From a theoretical perspective, the primary advantage of the CBBE model lies in its ability to translate the concept of brand equity into actionable consumer behaviour metrics. As Keller noted, 'Defining brand equity from the consumer's perspective helps managers understand how marketing influences brand value'(Keller, 1993). This approach not only supports the development of brand relationship theory but also provides a useful framework for cross-cultural brand research. For example, in destination marketing, researchers can utilize the CBBE's performance-image-resonance dimensions to assess tourists' perceptions of a destination brand (Keller, 2016).

In summary, the CBBE model serves as a bridge between theory and practice, establishing the logic of brand equity creation through four steps: 'cognition, meaning, response, and connection.' The CBBE model addresses the shortcomings of earlier brand research in terms of consumer psychology, offering businesses a strategic guide from brand identification to relationship building. In today's digital marketing environment, the value of CBBE is even more prominent. Whether launching a new brand or revitalizing a traditional brand for a younger audience, CBBE remains an essential tool for understanding how brands take root in consumers' minds.

Applying the CBBE Model to Sawasdee Gems: Building Cultural Brand Value through Consumer Perception. To illustrate the practical application of the CBBE model in cross-cultural jewelry marketing, this study examines Sawasdee Gems, a Thai start-up leveraging Chinese TikTok. The brand's focus on cultural heritage + trend expression provides a relevant case for testing the model's applicability in niche cultural products.

2.5.1. Brand Identity

The first stage looks at brand identity. It uses brand salience to measure how well people know the brand. In simple terms, brand awareness means people can remember and recognize the brand. It also means they can connect the brand's name, logo, or symbol with something they already know. The first thing to do when building a strong brand is to make sure the brand identity is clear and correct. The goal is to help customers link the brand with a certain type of product or need.

Sawasdee Gems is a start-up brand from Thailand. It focuses on the Chinese market. The brand sells and promotes traditional Thai jewelry on the Chinese TikTok platform. Its main idea is "Cultural Heritage + Trend Expression."

The jewelry market is very competitive. Sawasdee Gems wants to break the common view that Thai jewelry is only about Buddha amulets or old patterns. The brand uses modern design and new technology to show the beauty of Thai jewelry in a new way. It puts cultural stories into every product.

Sawasdee Gems mainly sells through social e-commerce. It is more than just a jewelry store. It is also a place where people can share culture and explore new styles. The brand hopes each piece of jewelry can be a bridge between Thai and Chinese culture. It also wants the jewelry to help young people express who they are.

Brand Name

The brand name is "Sawasdee Gems". We really put a lot of thought into it. It combines the essence of Thai culture with our brand's goals. "Sawasdee" is a common greeting in Thailand. People use it when they meet and say goodbye, and it's very important in Thai etiquette. By using this word, we want everyone to feel like they're greeting a friend when they're shopping, making it super friendly and warm. That way, people will be more willing to come and browse. Over time, they'll develop a good impression of our brand and trust us more.

"Gems" usually means jewelry, and Thailand is indeed famous for its jewelry. But for us, it has a deeper meaning. It represents the cultural treasures of Thailand. Culture is the most precious thing of a country, just like a shining gem. By

naming the brand “Sawasdee Gems”, we hope to share the cultural treasures of Thailand with more people and let everyone feel the unique charm of Thai culture.

Brand Slogan

Our slogan is “One Gift at a Time”. Actually, it's because we think souvenirs are essentially gifts Gordon,B.(1986). when people travel, they always buy some souvenirs at the scenic spots. It's a way to remember their trip, and sometimes they also bring them for their family and friends, which is giving gifts.

This slogan not only explains the use of souvenirs but also reflects our brand's concept. I plan to take it step by step, promoting our products one by one. I want each sold souvenir to be a little envoy of cultural exchange, spreading Thai culture. This also shows that cultural dissemination can't be rushed. I need to take our time and keep at it to be effective.

Brand Logo

The design of the brand logo combines Thai culture with a modern style. We chose purple. In many cultures, purple represents wisdom, mystery, and creativity. This matches the profound history and culture of Thailand very well, and it can immediately make people feel that our brand is cultural and special.

In the middle of the logo is the smiling face of a young person wearing a hat that represents Thai Buddhist culture. Thailand is known as the “Land of Smiles”, and this smiling face is the best symbol. We chose the smiling face of a young person because our main target is Chinese college students. Young people will feel closer when they see someone of the same age. This makes the brand image more down - to - earth and more in line with the preferences of young people. At the same time, it also makes the brand look more energetic and fashionable, keeping up with the current trend.

Sawasdee Gems includes the common Thai greeting "Sawasdee" in its brand name. Its logo design also mixes traditional Buddhist elements with a modern style. This unique branding strategy is important for addressing Research Question 1. Many Chinese consumers now think of Thai jewelry mainly as religious amulets. But Sawasdee Gems tries to change this idea. Sawasdee Gems brand name and logo

highlight wider parts of Thai culture and reduce the focus on religious symbols. In relation to Research Objective 1, this helps shift consumer understanding from a narrow perception of religion to a broader view of Thai cultural heritage. When consumers see the brand name and logo, they are more likely to think about the rich culture of Thailand. This builds a stronger foundation for future brand development.

Customer Group

Sawasdee Gems' main consumers are Chinese university students living in Thailand, aged 18 to 24. These young people are at the most exploratory and self-expressive stage of their lives, with higher education, cross-cultural adaptability, and aesthetic awareness. The majority of consumers are female, but there are also some male customers who buy products for gift-giving or cultural interest. They usually come from better-off families with a certain amount of disposable income and tend to look for consumer products with emotional value and cultural significance in their lives.

Having studied and lived in a foreign country, these young people have a natural curiosity about Thai local culture and are particularly interested in Thai handicrafts, Buddhist aesthetics, and ethnic elements. They are not satisfied with the tourist's perspective of 'card-consumption', but rather hope to establish a deep connection between themselves and foreign cultures through in-depth contact with local cultures. Therefore, for them, accessories are not only a decoration, but also a symbol of cultural identity. They tend to choose jewelry with traditional flavors and modern design to express their unique aesthetic interest and cultural taste.

In terms of consumer behavior, these consumers are sensitive to price, but are willing to pay a reasonable premium for 'cultural value + design'. They are keen on online shopping, especially relying on platforms such as Chinese TikTok for product information and shopping inspiration. The visual appeal of the content, cultural stories and wearable suggestions are the key factors influencing their decision-making. They also have a strong tendency to socialize and share and are happy to show off the 'special niche' accessories they have purchased on social platforms and through such

sharing, they strengthen their own cultural tastes and personality labels in their friends' circles or communities.

In addition, this group of young people often have a strong sense of cultural dissemination. They are willing to recommend the niche brands they find with cultural heritage to their friends and family or social media followers in China, which becomes an important 'seed user' for the early dissemination of the brand. They are also emotionally driven consumers, often purchasing commemorative Thai jewelry for birthdays, anniversaries, holidays or before returning to their home countries, not only to satisfy their personal adornment needs, but also as a gift to convey the importance of human relationships.

2.5.2. Brand Meaning

Hyper-Targeted Product Line

In the product selection criteria, I maintain a strong emphasis on quality and design, requiring that all chosen brands must fully align with Sawasdee Gems' brand concept. Based on this, two target brands were ultimately selected.

The first brand called Glowly. Glowly is original in a gold production technique called electroforming. Normally, this technique is used in the factory to produce items like the tops of pagodas or decorations for Buddhist temples in Thailand. However, one advantage of this technique is that it allows Glowly to create larger pieces with less material, which in this case means Glowly can use less gold, or what is also known as "hollow gold." Despite using less material, it is stronger than other methods of gold embellishment. For the first collection, Glowly conducted research to understand the design preferences of the target audience,

"Mutelu" is a Thai cultural belief and lifestyle trend that blends spirituality with daily life. It often involves practices like wearing amulets, praying to specific deities, or performing rituals for luck, love, career success, or protection. People who follow "Mutelu" believe in the spiritual power of gods, sacred objects, astrology, or charms. In modern Thai culture, especially among younger generations, "Mutelu" has become popular and fashionable - for example, wearing jewelry or accessories that are spiritually meaningful while still being stylish.

Glowly chose designs that reflect the concept of various deities. And Glowly researched the five main deities that are popular in Thai culture: Phra Phikanet, Phra Thaewessuwan, Phra Mae Kuan Im, and Phra Mae Lakshmi. Each deity has its own energy, which can convey different meanings to the wearer. However, there are also overlapping energies because Thai people often honor different deities for similar purposes.

Glowly offered a variety of sizes to enhance the fun and personalization of wearing its pieces. It also encourages the target audience to enjoy the process of accumulating wealth through gold, as the playful and meaningful designs serve as motivation for continuous collection. Each deity is represented through multiple patterns and styles, allowing customers to mix, match, and arrange their jewelry in different, creative ways.

The second brand called Punika Jewellery. Punika Jewellery uses silver from Thailand, known worldwide for its high quality. The brand takes inspiration from traditional Thai desserts like ทองหยีป (gold pinch dessert) and บัวลอย (floating lotus dessert). The founder saw the cultural value and good luck symbols behind these Thai desserts, and found creative ways to use them in jewelry design. By breaking down dessert elements into design pieces, the brand offers unique mix-and-match options never seen before. Punika Jewellery also uses modular designs - like building blocks you can rearrange. This lets you wear one piece of jewelry in multiple ways.

Glowly and Punika Jewellery combines Thai traditional craft, cultural elements, and modern design. This directly responds to Research Question 2, which focuses on the problem of similar “Buddha amulet” content in online Thai jewelry promotion. For example, Punika Jewellery takes design ideas from Thai desserts. This kind of cultural storytelling gives the brand a unique and different meaning. Based on Research Objective 2, building this kind of rich and diverse brand meaning can help challenge the single religious theme in the market. It can also draw more attention to the wider cultural value behind Thai jewelry and influence consumers’ willingness to buy. At the same time, the brand value “wearable culture” sees jewelry as a way to carry

culture. This idea fits closely with Research Question 2, which hopes to change how consumers see Thai jewelry through cultural storytelling. It also makes the brand stand out in terms of culture and helps solve the problem of content similarity in online promotion.

Brand Performance: High Quality Empowered by Modern Technology Product Quality and Performance

Sawasdee Gems ensures product quality by partnering with two key brands. These partnerships guarantee the authenticity and high standards of raw materials. For the gold collection made with Glowly, all gold is sourced from local Thai refineries and refined using strict purification methods to meet international standards. For the silver collection made with Punika Jewellery, the brand selects high-quality silver mined in Thailand. This silver is pure and flexible, offering a solid base for detailed craftsmanship.

In terms of manufacturing, each partner brand brings its strengths. Glowly uses advanced electroforming technology. This process allows the creation of gold jewelry that is as delicate as lace, with fine, hollow patterns. The final product looks light and refined, while remaining strong and durable. Punika Jewellery focuses on modular design. Their pieces can be broken down into smaller parts. Consumers can mix and match these parts based on their style preferences. This gives each item multiple ways to wear, balancing creativity and functionality.

Service Level

Sawasdee Gems builds an efficient and user-friendly service system. Using the Chinese TikTok platform, the brand runs regular livestreams. These sessions offer 360-degree views of the jewelry, showing details, craftsmanship, and how the items look when worn. Professional hosts explain the product features and share the cultural background. They also answer customer questions in real time.

The customer service team is available 24/7. Whether customers need help with product details, after-sales support, or custom requests, they receive fast and professional replies. To reduce shopping concerns, the brand also offers a no-

questions-asked return and exchange policy. This ensures a smooth and worry-free shopping experience.

Brand Imagery: Telling Cultural Stories in a Modern Way

Brand Personality

Sawasdee Gems shapes its brand personality as an “innovative inheritor.” The brand honors Thailand’s long-standing jewelry traditions while also pushing the limits of design. It shows a spirit of progress and creativity. By working with Glowly and Punika Jewellery, Sawasdee Gems brings together modern techniques and fresh design ideas. This supports its core message: that tradition and innovation can inspire each other. It helps consumers recognize the brand’s forward-thinking identity.

Brand Values

The brand centers its values on the idea of “wearable culture.” It aims to pass on and promote Thai culture through jewelry. Each product carries deep cultural meaning. From locally sourced materials to craftsmanship filled with traditional knowledge, every step tells a story of Thailand. Sawasdee Gems turns jewelry from a simple accessory into a cultural symbol. It inspires consumers to explore and connect with Thai heritage.

2.5.3. Brand Response

2.5.3.1. Judgments

Brand Quality Evaluation

Sawasdee Gems has built a strong reputation for quality through its partnerships with Glowly and Punika Jewellery. Consumers consistently highlight the brand’s use of “high-quality local materials” and “advanced craftsmanship.” The brand selects gold and silver sourced from Thailand and applies electroforming technology and modular design. This gives each piece both durability and unique style.

The brand also uses Chinese TikTok livestreams to display jewelry from all angles. These videos show the product details clearly, helping consumers assess craftsmanship directly. Many viewers leave comments like, “You can clearly see the fine details—the product looks exactly like it does in the livestream.” This direct feedback strengthens trust in the brand’s quality.

Brand Credibility Evaluation

Sawasdee Gems builds trust through multiple strategies. The brand offers 24/7 customer service and supports a no-questions-asked return policy, which reduces perceived risk. At the same time, the brand encourages user-generated content to spread positive word of mouth.

For example, Sawasdee Gems runs a “Share and Win” campaign in its Chinese TikTok livestreams. Customers who purchase jewelry are invited to post photos, videos, or short notes sharing their wearing experience. They can include the hashtag #SawasdeeGemsCulturalJewelry. High-quality creators receive rewards such as discount coupons. Their posts may also be featured or reused as official promotional content. This peer-to-peer sharing model helps the brand turn loyal customers into advocates and builds trust among new consumers.

2.5.3.2. Feelings

Emotional Resonance

Sawasdee Gems connects with consumers emotionally through short videos on Chinese TikTok. The brand created a series called “Decoding Thai Culture,” which explores the cultural background behind each piece of jewelry. Each episode shows how a design goes from sketch to final product. The brand owner also appears to explain the religious or historical meaning behind the design.

To deepen engagement, the brand launched a user-generated content (UGC) campaign called “My Story with Thai Culture.” It invites users to wear the jewelry and share personal experiences related to Thai culture, such as travel memories or cultural learning. Outstanding entries receive a customized gift box from the brand. Through consistent and meaningful storytelling, Sawasdee Gems links Thai culture with personal emotion and builds long-term emotional bonds with its audience.

Social Approval

The brand’s design and cultural values help consumers form a distinct social identity. People who wear Sawasdee Gems jewelry are often seen as “culturally refined” and “style-conscious.” In social settings, this earns them attention and recognition.

On Chinese TikTok, the brand created the “Cultural Jewelry Styling Challenge.” It invites fashion influencers and everyday users to style Sawasdee Gems pieces with various outfits. This campaign increases brand visibility while also encouraging consumers to see the jewelry as part of their self-expression. It gives them a sense of belonging and social recognition through what they wear.

2.5.4. Brand Resonance

Brand Loyalty

Sawasdee Gems strengthens brand loyalty by offering a tiered membership system. The program includes three levels: Silver Diamond, Gold Diamond, and Platinum Diamond, based on the customer’s annual spending.

Silver Diamond members enjoy a 5% discount on purchases and double reward points during their birthday month. Gold Diamond members receive additional benefits, including priority customer service, free jewelry cleaning, and one monthly 20% discount coupon.

Platinum Diamond members, the highest tier, receive an extra discount (15% off regular-priced items), early access to new product trials, and free jewelry remodeling using Punika Jewellery’s modular designs.

This membership system enhances the shopping experience not only through financial rewards but also by offering exclusive services. These benefits help users feel a sense of identity and prestige, encouraging long-term emotional attachment to the brand.

Brand Engagement

Sawasdee Gems uses Chinese TikTok as its main platform to create a three-way collaboration between consumers, the brand, and partners.

For content co-creation, the brand launched the “My Thai Cultural Inspiration” design competition. Users can upload jewelry design sketches using Chinese TikTok’s sticker function. Other users then vote for their favorite designs, and winning entries are turned into limited-edition products featuring the creator’s ID.

The brand also hosts a "User Decision Hour" during its weekly livestreams every Wednesday evening. During this segment, consumers vote on the jewelry style and content to be presented in the next session. This approach allows users to take an active role in shaping brand communication.

Word-of-Mouth Communication

Sawasdee Gems has developed a multi-level word-of-mouth network.

At the individual level, the brand has improved its "Share and Earn" program. Users who post Chinese TikTok videos showcasing product details and explaining cultural meanings—tagged with #SawasdeeGemsCulturalHeritage—can earn tiered rewards. For example, a video with 100 likes earns a 50 RMB voucher, while 1,000 likes unlock a free custom engraving service.

At the community level, the brand manages a "Gems Cultural Community" on Chinese TikTok. It regularly hosts livestream events, inviting partner designers to interact with users and answer questions about design and craftsmanship. The brand also collaborates with cultural influencers to produce a content series called "Uncovering Thai Jewelry Culture." This initiative uses in-depth storytelling to reach broader audiences and inspire cultural interest.

Through these strategies, Sawasdee Gems transforms Thai jewelry from a cultural symbol into part of consumers' daily emotional lives. It shifts from simply delivering cultural messages to co-creating a shared cultural lifestyle. This approach helps the brand secure a unique position in the minds of its consumers.

2.6. Hypotheses Development

Based on the challenges faced by Thai jewelry on the Chinese TikTok platform, such as difficulties in information access, limited brand recognition, and trust deficits, this study employs the CBBE model to address these issues from the dimensions of brand identity, meaning, and resonance. Three hypotheses are proposed: first, optimizing brand identity by combining cultural storytelling with traditional religious symbols; second, enhancing resonance and driving purchases through cultural

narrative content to convey brand meaning; and third, leveraging Chinese TikTok's interactive features to build a hybrid trust system that enhances loyalty and fosters brand resonance. The aim is to provide empirical exploration directions for Thai jewelry to break through communication barriers, reshape Chinese university students in Thailand' perceptions and trust, and refine cross-cultural marketing strategies.



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research approach to examine Chinese university students in Thailand's perceptions, preferences, and Chinese TikTok consumption behaviors related to Thai jewelry. Guided by the CBBE model and aiming to address issues like information asymmetry and cognitive biases in Thai jewelry promotion on Chinese TikTok, through verifying these hypotheses, the study elucidates the mechanisms through which young Chinese university students in Thailand (aged 18 - 24) process cultural content about Thai jewelry, form perceptions of brand cultural image, and ultimately develop purchase intentions.

3.1. Hypothesis Summary

Hypothesis 1: TikTok cultural content exposure has a positive impact on brand awareness.

Hypothesis 2: Cultural narratives have a profound positive impact on purchasing intentions.

Hypothesis 3: The intensity of interaction on Chinese TikTok positively influences brand trust and, in turn, promotes purchase intent.

This study focuses on Chinese university students in Thailand. They are familiar with both cultures and are active TikTok users, which makes them a good group to study the effects of cultural marketing on TikTok.

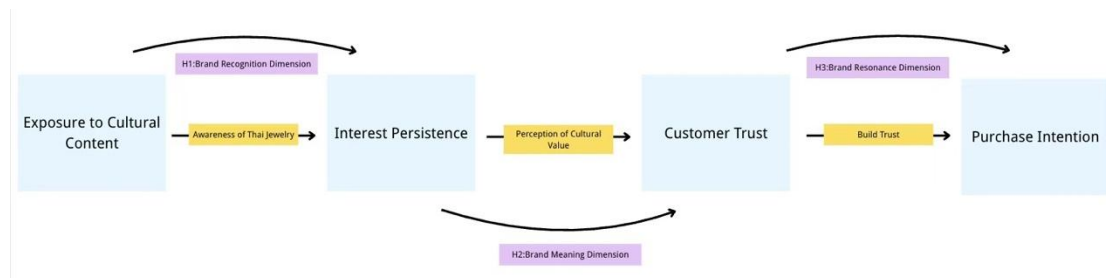


Figure 1 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

3.2. Population and Sampling

3.2.1. Target Population

The target population for this study is Chinese university students aged 18–24 years who are currently enrolled in higher education institutions in Thailand. This specific group was selected due to their unique position as cross-cultural consumers: they are physically immersed in Thai society while maintaining strong cultural and linguistic ties to China, making them key participants in cross-border e-commerce and cultural consumption via platforms like Chinese TikTok.

3.2.2. Sampling Criteria

Demographic:

1. Age: Aged 18–24 (aligned with typical university enrollment ages for undergraduate and early graduate students).
2. Nationality: Chinese citizens (including those from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan).
3. Residence: Currently residing in Thailand for academic purposes (e.g., full-time students at Thai universities).

3.3. Sampling Method

Based on the above criteria, this study used a mix of convenience and snowball sampling. This helped reach students in different locations and made it easier to build trust through personal networks. The method includes:

Mixed Convenience Method-Chinese Social Media Outreach

Platforms: Distribute survey links via WeChat, Chinese TikTok using targeted hashtags and community forums relevant to Chinese university students in Thailand.

Snowball Sampling via Personal Networks

- a. Initial Sample: Start with friends and acquaintances who are Chinese university students in Thailand, ensuring they meet the age and residency criteria.

b. Referral Mechanism: Encourage initial participants to invite peers via social media or messaging apps (e.g., "Please share this survey with your friends studying in Thailand").

3.3.1. Sample Size and Validation

1. Target Size: 198 participants, with at least 50% recruited via social media and 50% via snowball referrals to balance reach and network reliability.

2. Rationale for Sampling Methods

a. Social Media Outreach: Efficiently reaches a broad, geographically dispersed population of Chinese university students in Thailand, leveraging platforms they use daily.

b. Snowball Sampling: Builds trust through personal connections, particularly useful for sensitive topics (e.g., consumer behavior) and ensuring participation from hard-to-reach subgroups (e.g., students in smaller Thai universities).

3.3.2. Limitations and Mitigations

a. Sampling Bias: Over-reliance on personal networks may introduce homophily bias (participants resembling each other in demographics or interests). Mitigate by actively promoting the survey across diverse social media communities (not just close networks).

b. Geographic Concentration: Most participants may be from Bangkok (major university hub). Address by explicitly inviting students from non-metropolitan areas in social media posts.

3.4. Core Variable

This study follows the theoretical logic of "Cultural Narrative – Cognitive Reshaping – Trust Building" to construct a three-dimensional variable framework. The framework includes independent variables, dependent variables, and mediating variables. Each variable is operationally defined to align closely with the research questions and hypothesis testing.

3.4.1. Independent Variables

Exposure to Cultural Content: This refers to how actively users engage with Thai jewelry-related cultural content on TikTok. It is measured by whether the user follows content such as on-site footage of Thai temples/crafts or design story explanations (binary variable: Yes/No). This variable supports the hypothesis in H1, which explores whether cultural content enhances brand recognition.

Platform Usage Intensity: This variable reflects how much users rely on TikTok. It is measured by the average daily usage time (categorical variable: < 30 minutes / 30–60 minutes / 1–2 hours / >2 hours). It serves as a contextual factor influencing the effectiveness of cultural content exposure.

Preference for Official Channels: This variable is based on users' preferred purchase channels. It is defined by whether users prefer to buy through the brand's official TikTok account (binary variable: Yes/No). It is directly linked to H3, which concerns trust-based brand building.

Willingness to Participate in Interaction: This captures users' attitudes toward participating in cultural interaction activities, such as live-streamed craft sessions or design voting. It is measured as "Active" vs. "Not Active" (binary variable). This variable is relevant to H2, which examines how cultural resonance can drive purchase behavior through mediation.

3.4.2. Dependent Variables

Awareness of Thai Jewelry: This variable measures the extent to which users know about Thai jewelry's cultural background. It is operationalized as levels of awareness (categorical variable: Never heard / Slightly aware / Somewhat understood / Deeply understood). It directly reflects the effectiveness of brand recognition as stated in H1.

Perception of Cultural Value: This is quantified by how frequently users choose "Cultural Uniqueness" as the most attractive factor in Thai jewelry. It is used to test H2, which focuses on cultural storytelling and value resonance.

Purchase Intention Strength: This composite index evaluates the likelihood of users buying Thai jewelry on TikTok. It combines the influence of “Cultural Narrative” in decision-making factors and the user’s acceptable price range (notably, 83.3% fall into the low-to-mid price segments). This supports the logic of H2 regarding purchase drivers.

Level of Trust: This variable measures the user’s perceived trust in TikTok-based Thai jewelry information. It is based on combined scores of seller credibility, price transparency, and product review transparency. It supports hypothesis H3 on the role of trust mechanisms.

3.4.3. Mediating Variables

Cultural Resonance: This variable reflects users’ emotional identification with the cultural stories of Thai jewelry. It is indirectly measured through their willingness to participate in interaction activities (i.e., higher willingness indicates stronger resonance). It helps explain the mediating process in H2 from cultural storytelling to behavior change.

Brand Trust: This variable combines users’ preference for official accounts and their trust evaluations. It reflects the level of trust users place in the brand and serves as a mediating factor in the H3 pathway: “Interactive Functions → Trust → Purchase Intention.”

3.4.4. Variable Measurement and Data Linkage

Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire. All items were designed using Likert scales or categorical options (e.g., 4-level awareness scale, multiple-choice questions). The relationships among variables were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency distribution), Pearson correlation analysis, and path analysis. Together, these methods form a complete methodological chain of “Variable Definition – Measurement – Hypothesis Testing” and provide the theoretical foundation for the data analysis in Chapter 4.

3.5. Data Collection and Method Tool

The questionnaire design (see section 3.3) facilitated turning the variables into measurable items for analysis. This study used descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and path analysis to test the hypotheses. Each method matched a specific research focus—for example, path analysis was used to test the link between cultural storytelling and purchase intention, as suggested in H2.

3.5.1. Data Collection

This study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design using a closed-ended questionnaire to systematically gather data on Chinese university students' perceptions, preferences, and Chinese TikTok consumption behaviors related to Thai jewelry. The design ensures alignment with the research objectives of testing the mediating role of brand cultural image in the relationship between cultural content engagement and purchase intent.

3.5.2. The questionnaire comprises four sections

This study employed a structured online questionnaire to collect data, comprising four distinct sections, each aimed at capturing: (1) basic awareness and interest in Thai jewelry, (2) China TikTok usage preferences, (3) purchase intention toward Thai jewelry, and (4) platform functionality and improvement suggestions. All items utilized closed-ended response formats to ensure data standardization and analytical reliability, with the primary objective of validating the influence mechanism of cultural content exposure on purchase intention, including the mediating role of brand cultural image.

1. Basic Awareness and Interest in Thai Jewelry : This section assessed respondents' knowledge and interest through three multiple-choice items, measuring cultural symbol recognition, interest intensity, and knowledge depth. For instance, to gauge awareness levels, one question asked, "How familiar are you with Thai jewelry?" with a 4-point scale ranging from "Not at all aware" to "Very familiar," capturing varying degrees of interest differentiation.

2. Chinese TikTok Usage Preferences : Four items evaluated respondents' platform engagement behaviors, including content preferences, interaction patterns, and shopping feature utilization frequency. A representative question, "Which types of content do you primarily watch on Chinese TikTok?" offered options such as "Beauty/Fashion" and "Cultural/Travel," enabling quantitative measurement of cultural content exposure depth and modality.

3. Purchase Intention Toward Thai Jewelry : Three items measured direct purchase likelihood and indirect recommendation intention, incorporating multidimensional analysis of decision-making factors. For example, the question "How likely are you to purchase Thai jewelry through Chinese TikTok?" was complemented by inquiries about influential factors (cultural value, price, influencer endorsements, etc.), providing empirical support for hypothesis testing.

4. Platform Functionality and Suggestions : This final section contained three pivotal questions focusing on practical Chinese TikTok applications and optimization potential for Thai jewelry sales. One item asked, "Which Chinese TikTok shopping features have you used for Thai jewelry purchases?" with response options including "Live-stream shopping," "Short video product links," and "Store search," facilitating analysis of user preference patterns regarding platform tools.

3.6. Data Analysis

This study employs descriptive statistics to conduct a thorough examination of the collected data.

Descriptive analysis is one of the most basic and commonly used methods in data analysis. Descriptive statistics are primarily used to summarize and describe the basic characteristics of data. This method helps researchers quickly understand key information, such as the distribution, central tendency, and variability of data. Descriptive statistics are an essential component of preliminary data analysis and provide the foundation for subsequent inferential statistical tests. As part of good research practice, researchers should systematically report the most appropriate

descriptive statistics to minimize the risk of providing misleading results (Mishra et al., 2019). In this study, descriptive statistics were used to present the distribution characteristics of respondents across multiple dimensions, including their basic knowledge and interest in Thai jewelry, preferences for using TikTok, purchase intentions, and feedback on platform features. The analysis also outlined the overall characteristics of the sample, such as the level of awareness of Thai cultural symbols among different user groups and the frequency of use of TikTok features.



CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter explores the findings of this study, titled – Chinese university students' perceptions, preferences, and TikTok consumption behaviors related to Thai jewelry, and tests the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: TikTok cultural content exposure has a positive impact on brand awareness

Hypothesis 2: Cultural narratives have a profound positive impact on purchasing intentions.

Hypothesis 3: The intensity of interaction on Chinese TikTok positively influences brand trust and, in turn, promotes purchase intent.

4.1. General Findings

Descriptive statistical analysis

1. Have you heard of Thai jewelry (e.g., Buddha amulets, Thai silver jewelry, gemstone jewelry, etc.)?

Table 1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Have you heard of Thai jewelry (such as Buddha amulets, Thai silver jewelry, gemstone jewelry, etc.)?	
Options	Proportion
I have heard it. but I don't know much about it.	74.75%
Somewhat understood.	10.1%
I've never heard of it.	11.62%
Very well-understood.	3.54%

Analysis: The data show that respondents' awareness of Thai jewelry is indicates "a broad but shallow understanding." Only 11.62% of participants selected "I've never heard of it," indicating that Thai jewelry is at a basic level of exposure among the audience. This offers a foundational audience base for content marketing strategies. However, 74.75% of respondents reported "I have heard of it, but I don't know much about it," suggesting that most participants remain at a superficial understanding. Only 10.1% indicated "Somewhat understood," and a mere 3.54% considered themselves "Very well-understood." These figures highlight a significant gap in in-depth knowledge in user understanding.

This state of "recognition without familiarity" not only confirms the widespread existence of cognitive bias, and it also underscores the necessity of targeted cultural content. If users already had a deep understanding, content marketing would have little room to improve brand perception. becomes essential in bridging the cognitive gap through TikTok. It can help bridge the cognitive gap, reduce misunderstanding, enrich cultural diversity perception, and enhance brand recognition. In summary, this descriptive statistical analysis provides empirical support for Hypothesis 1 from two perspectives: the existence of the problem and the strategic need for intervention. It grounds the hypothesis—"optimizing brand recognition through content marketing"—in the current reality of user knowledge gaps, strengthening the theoretical and practical importance of the hypothesis.

2. What is the main reason for your interest in Thai jewelry?

Table 2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

What it the main reason for your interest in Thai jewelry?	
Options	Proportion
Social media-Chinese TikTok	55.05%
Friend Recommendation	35.35%
Film and Television	35.35%
Travel Experience	20.71%
Others	17.17%

Analysis: The data reveals a clear channel-specific pattern: over half of the respondents (55.05%) reported that their interest in Thai jewelry was triggered by “Social Media – Chinese TikTok,” significantly higher than other channels such as “Friend Recommendation” (35.35%) and “Film and Television” (35.35%). This result provides direct evidence that TikTok plays a dominant role in disseminating information and sparking interest in Thai jewelry. Compared to traditional interpersonal communication or media placement, TikTok—through short videos and live streams—has become the primary access point for users to engage with Thai jewelry.

From the perspective of hypothesis development, this finding supports the foundational logic behind all three hypotheses: H1, H2 and H3. Each of these relies on the platform’s strong communication power and ability to generate interest. By quantitatively confirming that TikTok is the leading source of consumer interest, the data validates the strategic value of the platform. Since TikTok serves as the key entry point for consumer awareness, implementing cultural storytelling and trust-building strategies within its ecosystem becomes a realistic and effective approach. This transforms the theoretical framework of “content marketing → brand asset development” into a practical model rooted in high-impact media channels, strengthening both the rationality and feasibility of the proposed hypotheses.

3.What do you find most appealing about Thai jewelry?

Table 3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

What do you find most appealing about Thai Jewelry?	
Options	Proportion
Culture Uniqueness	66.67%
Design style	54.55%
Material Quality	37.88%
Value of money	21.21%
Others	13.13%

Analysis: In the survey results on “factors contributing to the attractiveness of Thai jewelry,” cultural uniqueness ranked first with an overwhelming majority of 66.67%, significantly higher than design style (54.55%) and material quality (37.88%). This result not only highlights the key dimension of user preference but also reflects a broader shift in consumer perception—away from physical product attributes and toward cultural value. Consumers increasingly prefer products that carry cultural meanings, such as religious symbols or traditional craftsmanship, as a way to express identity and establish cultural affiliation.

This finding supports the practical value of cultural capital theory in the field of consumer behavior. It indicates that cultural uniqueness has become a critical foundation for Thai jewelry to build differentiated competitive advantages.

From the perspective of hypothesis validation, the data provides strong support for the theoretical framework of “cultural content marketing as a driver of brand value recognition.”

H1 and H2 are grounded in the assumption that cultural uniqueness is a core user demand. The data confirms this assumption by quantitatively identifying cultural uniqueness as the leading factor in consumer interest. This establishes a solid foundation for marketing strategies designed around this value proposition.

Within TikTok’s short-form content ecosystem, marketing campaigns that focus on cultural stories and traditional craftsmanship of Thai jewelry can directly address users’ value expectations. As a result, the theoretical path of “cultural content → enhanced brand value recognition” becomes a practical and actionable marketing approach, reinforcing the relevance and applicability of the proposed research hypotheses.

4. On average, how much time do you spend on Chinese TikTok per day?

Table 4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

On average, how much time do you spend on Chinese TikTok per day?	
Options	Proportion
More than 2 hours	29.8%
Less than 30minutes	25.25%
30-60 minutes	25.25%
1-2 hours	22.22%

Analysis: The data shows that nearly 30% (29.8%) of users spend more than two hours daily on TikTok, while over 72.72% use the app for more than 30 minutes each day. This distribution reflects TikTok's deep integration into users' daily media habits rather than just time accumulation. Such usage patterns are particularly significant in consumer behavior studies, as the ample "time window" allows brands to embed cultural storytelling into users' routine scrolling. Similar to vendors in Thai night markets engaging passersby with product stories, TikTok offers Thai jewelry brands opportunities to share narratives—like design origins or craftsmanship—and gradually influence user perception through ongoing storytelling.

From a hypothesis validation standpoint, this data establishes a fundamental condition for all three hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3). Their effectiveness depends on high-frequency user engagement. With most users spending at least 30 minutes daily, repeated exposure to the same brand narrative becomes possible—a key mechanism for building brand assets. In media exposure research, such time distribution is recognized as essential for deep marketing, forming the basis of the full marketing funnel: content exposure → cognitive reinforcement → emotional resonance → behavioral conversion. This not only supports the theoretical feasibility of

cultural marketing within TikTok but also aligns with concrete user behavior patterns, demonstrating its practical potential.

5.The main types of content you follow on Chinese TikTok include?

Table 5 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The main types of content you follow on Chinese TikTok include? (Multiple Question)	
Options	Proportion
Culture/Tourism	58.59%
Comedy and Entertainment	56.06%
Fashion	46.46%
Knowledge Popularization	45.45%
Celebrity/KOL	27.27%
Others	20.2%

Analysis: The data clearly reveals users' content preference structure. Over half (58.59%) of users are interested in Culture/Tourism-related content, closely followed by Comedy and Entertainment (56.06%), forming the two most popular content categories. Fashion (46.46%) and Knowledge Popularization (45.45%) also show relatively high levels of user interest. This result directly confirms that cultural experience is one of the core needs of TikTok users. The high level of attention toward culture and tourism reflects the platform's capacity to serve as a channel for cultural value dissemination, laying the foundation for promoting Thai jewelry through storytelling, such as religious symbols and traditional craftsmanship.

From the perspective of hypothesis alignment, both H1,H2—rely on one key condition: users must be willing to engage with culture-related content. This dataset quantifies the high level of user interest in Culture/Tourism content, providing strong evidence that TikTok is well-suited for delivering Thai jewelry's cultural marketing messages.

The alignment between user preferences and brand content focus gives Thai jewelry brands a content-fit advantage. Stories about heritage, symbols, and craftsmanship can seamlessly integrate into the user's content consumption flow. This natural fit makes it more feasible to transform “cultural content delivery” into real marketing outcomes, helping bridge the gap between cultural storytelling and brand recognition.

6. Have you seen content related to Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok (e.g., store visits, unboxing, cultural explanations)?

Table 6 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Have you seen any content related to Thai Jewelry on Chinese TikTok (such as store visits, unboxing videos, culture explanations)?	
Options	Proportion
Occasionally	57.07%
Never seen	35.35%
Often seen	7.07%
Very frequently	0.51%

Analysis: The data highlights a clear pattern in content exposure. More than half of respondents (57.07%) reported that they occasionally see content related to Thai jewelry. Meanwhile, 35.35% said they have never seen such content. Only 7.07% often see it, and a mere 0.51% very frequently encounter it. This indicates that Thai jewelry content currently has limited reach on TikTok. While there is some degree of exposure (as shown by the “occasional” responses), the lack of high-frequency contact reflects a significant gap in both the depth and breadth of content distribution.

In relation to the study's hypotheses—whether it is H1 and H2—all require effective and sustained user exposure as a prerequisite. This data, by quantifying the low frequency of content exposure, reveals a clear opportunity for optimization in current Thai jewelry marketing strategies on TikTok.

The current reach is insufficient to form a consistent user perception. Therefore, brands can address this gap by strengthening their efforts in producing and distributing culturally rich content, such as explanations of craftsmanship and religious symbols. By increasing the frequency and depth of exposure, the theoretical pathway from cultural content delivery → user recognition → brand equity accumulation can be translated into a practical solution that addresses real-world limitations in content reach. This reinforces the necessity and feasibility of the study's hypotheses.

7. Which types of Chinese TikTok content would attract you to Thai jewelry?

Table 7 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Which of the following Chinese TikTok contents would attract you to follow Thai Jewelry? (Multiple Question)?	
Options	Proportion
On-sit Shooting of Thai Temples /Crafts	52.2%
Design Stories/Cultural Background Explanations	51.52%
Stars/Internet Celebrities Wearing and Displaying	37.37%
Price Discounts /promotional	27.78%
Others	15.15%

Analysis: The data clearly reveals users' content preferences when it comes to triggering interest. Over half of the respondents (52.2%) said they are drawn to Thai jewelry through on-site shooting of Thai temples and crafts, while 51.52% reported interest sparked by design stories and explanations of cultural background. These two content types emerged as the most attractive. This directly confirms that cultural experience and storytelling are the primary drivers of user interest in Thai jewelry. Users' strong preference for real-world temple or craft scenes and culturally rich design stories reflects the powerful attention-grabbing potential of cultural value dissemination within the TikTok ecosystem. These preferences provide a strong foundation for marketing Thai jewelry through cultural content—such as the interpretation of religious symbols and the narration of traditional craftsmanship.

In terms of hypothesis alignment, whether we consider H1 and H2 both rest on the fundamental assumption that users are interested in cultural content and willing to follow a brand because of it. This dataset, by quantifying the high appeal of cultural experience and narrative-driven content, confirms that TikTok-based cultural marketing of Thai jewelry has a clear interest-fit advantage.

The fact that brand content—such as on-site temple footage or background storytelling—directly aligns with what users are most drawn to means brands can effectively capture user attention. Thus, the theoretical path of cultural content → user attention → brand equity is grounded in a practical logic that meets user interest demand. This strengthens both the rationale and feasibility of the proposed hypotheses.

8. When purchasing Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok, which of the following options would you prefer?

Table 8 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

When purchasing Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok, which of the following options would you prefer?	
Options	Proportion
Brand 'Official Account	74.24%
Cross-border E-commerce store	13.13%
Purchasing agent	12.63%

Analysis: The data reveals a clear preference for specific purchasing channels: over 74.24% of users prefer to purchase Thai jewelry through the brand's official account on TikTok, significantly surpassing cross-border e-commerce platforms (13.13%) and purchasing agents (12.63%). This indicates that official brand accounts serve as the core trust anchor for Thai jewelry consumption on TikTok. Users' strong preference for official channels highlights the trust endorsement value of brand authenticity, offering a solid foundation for Thai jewelry brands to conduct cultural marketing and drive conversion through their official TikTok accounts.

From the perspective of hypothesis alignment, H3—along with its supporting logic (e.g., delivering cultural content via official accounts to strengthen trust), is grounded in the fundamental assumption that users trust official brand channels and are willing to make purchases through them.

This data, by quantifying the high preference for official brand accounts, confirms TikTok's trust aggregation advantage in Thai jewelry marketing. The brand's official account naturally carries user trust, and when leveraged to deliver cultural narratives and craftsmanship explanations, this trust can be transformed into recognition of cultural value.

9. What are the main factors influencing your decision to purchase Thai jewelry on TikTok?

Table 9 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The main factors influencing your purchase of Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok are? (multiple question)	
Options	Proportion
Seller credibility	51.52%
Price Transparency	50.51%
Product Reviews/ Reputation Transparency	50.51%
Cultural Narratives	31.31%
Logistics Speed and After-Sales Service	31.31%
Others	12.63%

Analysis: The data shows a multi-dimensional structure of purchase decision-making factors. "Seller credibility" (51.52%), "Price transparency" (50.51%), and "Product reviews/reputation transparency" (50.51%) rank as the top decision drivers. Additionally, "Cultural narratives" (31.31%) and "Logistics speed and after-sales service" (31.31%) also hold significant influence. This indicates that consumers not only emphasize foundational trust factors—such as seller reliability, pricing clarity, and word-of-mouth credibility—but also value cultural dimensions, particularly the storytelling aspect. Therefore, the construction of trust systems and the transmission of cultural value jointly constitute the core motivations behind Thai jewelry purchase decisions on TikTok.

From the perspective of hypothesis alignment, both H2 and H3 are based on the underlying logic that both trust and cultural elements jointly influence consumer decision-making.

By quantifying the decision-making weight of trust-related and culture-related factors, this data supports the notion that Thai jewelry marketing on TikTok holds

synergistic potential for trust and cultural optimization. Brands can strengthen seller credibility and improve transparency of price and reputation (solidifying trust foundations) through official accounts, while simultaneously delivering rich cultural narratives (infusing cultural value).

This approach enables the theoretical path—trust-building + cultural content → strengthened purchase intention—to be translated into a practical strategy aligned with user decision logic, thereby reinforcing the validity and integrative coherence of the proposed research hypotheses.

10. What price range for Thai jewelry on TikTok is acceptable to you?

Table 10 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

What is your acceptable price range for Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok?	
Options	Proportion
< 200 ¥	41.92%
500-1000¥	37.37%
200-500¥	37.37%
>1000¥	4.55%

Analysis: The data demonstrates a clear distribution of price preferences: over 40% (41.92%) of users are willing to pay less than ¥200, while both the ¥200–¥500 and ¥500–¥1000 ranges account for 37.37% respectively. Only 4.55% of respondents are open to spending over ¥1000. This indicates that user acceptance of Thai jewelry pricing on TikTok generally falls within the low-to-mid range, reflecting a strong emphasis on cost-effectiveness and light-consumption experiences within the platform context.

These insights provide a solid foundation for aligning pricing strategies with content-based cultural marketing. In other words, when designing product pricing and positioning, brands should consider the perceived value of cultural storytelling while

ensuring affordability—maximizing resonance with TikTok users’ pricing expectations and shopping behavior.

From the perspective of hypothesis linkage, the logic of H2 the derived concept of “cultural value enabling product premium” rests on the fundamental premise that users’ price acceptance is related to their perception of cultural value. Brands can leverage cultural content—such as craftsmanship and cultural stories—to enhance product added value, thereby aligning with users’ dual demands for cost-effectiveness and cultural value.

This validates that cultural marketing can connect price acceptance with purchase decisions, facilitating the practical implementation of the pathway: cultural content → value perception → price acceptance, which further strengthens the rationality of the hypothesis.

11. Which shopping-related features on Chinese TikTok have you used?

Table 11 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Which shopping-related features on Chinese TikTok have you used? (Multiple Question)	
Options	Proportion
Watching live-stream shopping	68.69%
In-video product link	41.92%
Group purchase activities	39.39%
Shop lighting deal	34.34%
Store Coupons	33.84%
Never used	15.15%

Analysis: The data on TikTok shopping feature usage in this study shows that over 60% (68.69%) of users have engaged in live stream shopping, while features such as video product links (41.92%) and group buying (39.39%) also demonstrate considerable usage rates. Only 15.15% of users have never used these functions. This indicates a high penetration of TikTok's shopping features—especially live streaming—with users accustomed to completing purchases within the platform environment. This data supports the three hypotheses: H1, H2 and H3.

Brands can utilize the high usage rates of live streaming and product linking features to integrate Thai jewelry's cultural content (such as craftsmanship stories and cultural background) into shopping scenarios. By employing interaction forms familiar to users, brands effectively convey value, validating the logic of “content contextualization → consumption conversion.” This strengthens the rationale linking cultural marketing with transactional outcomes and demonstrates that TikTok's shopping ecosystem can support a closed marketing loop of “cultural content + consumption conversion.”

12. What do you think needs the most improvement in Chinese TikTok's sales of Thai jewelry?

Table 12 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

What do you think needs the most improvement in China TikTok's sales of Thai Jewelry? (multiple question)	
Options	Proportion
Verification of product authenticity	71.72%
Accuracy of cultural information	57.07%
Logistics timeliness	35.35%
Customer service response speed	32.83%
Others	16.16%

Analysis: The data on “Areas for Improvement in TikTok Thai Jewelry Sales” in this study shows that over 70% (71.72%) of users believe that product authenticity verification needs enhancement, while more than half (57.07%) focus on the accuracy of cultural information. This reflects a strong user demand for both trust assurance and cultural value transmission. This provides practical support for the hypotheses: H1: Using cultural content on TikTok to enhance brand recognition, H2: Leveraging cultural storytelling to influence purchase intention, and H3: Building a trust-based brand relationship through TikTok engagement.

Users’ concerns about authenticity and cultural accuracy validate that “trust + cultural value” is the core optimization direction for Thai jewelry marketing on TikTok. Brands need to strengthen quality control through official channels (addressing authenticity issues) and deliver accurate, in-depth cultural narratives (such as craftsmanship background and religious symbol interpretation). This aligns with users’ needs for trust and cultural value, supporting the hypothesis logic of “trust system construction + precise cultural content → improved sales experience.” It demonstrates that optimizing trust and cultural elements can effectively advance TikTok Thai jewelry marketing.

13. Are you willing to participate in cultural interaction activities related to Thai jewelry on TikTok? (e.g., handicraft experiences live-streams, design voting)

Table 13 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Are you willing to participate in cultural interaction activities related to Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok? (such as handicraft experience live steams, design voting?)	
Options	Proportion
Willing	39.9%
Unsure	26.26%
Very willing	25.76%
Unwilling	8.08%

Analysis: The data reveals a positive user engagement attitude: over 60% of users (39.9% "willing" + 25.76% "very willing") show a positive stance towards cultural interaction activities related to Thai jewelry on TikTok (such as live-streamed handicraft experiences and design voting), while only 8.08% are "unwilling." This indicates a strong user demand and willingness to participate in Thai jewelry cultural interactions — these interactive activities have the potential to become effective touchpoints connecting users with the brand, creating conditions to convey cultural value and strengthen brand resonance.

From the perspective of hypothesis linkage, both H2: Leveraging cultural storytelling to influence purchase intention, and H3: Building a trust-based brand relationship through TikTok engagement. Require as a foundational premise that users are willing to participate in cultural interactions and accept brand cultural outreach. This data quantifies the high proportion of positive engagement attitude, demonstrating that cultural interaction marketing for Thai jewelry on TikTok has a solid user base and demand soil. Brands can utilize interactive formats such as handicraft experiences and design voting to integrate cultural stories (e.g., craftsmanship heritage, religious symbol meanings) into activities, leveraging user participation to achieve cultural value transmission and deepen brand recognition. This grounds the theoretical path of "cultural interaction implementation → user participation → strengthened brand resonance" into practical logic aligned with user needs, reinforcing the rationality and operability of the series of hypotheses.

4.2. Chinese TikTok User Analysis

To test the hypotheses, this study used an "Practical test using a TikTok brand account" as the data collection method. During the research period, six original videos were created and posted, focusing on the cultural identity of the Thai jewelry brand Sawasdee Gems. Videos will be posted from 4 May until 4 June. The content included brand introductions, User interaction content – testing consumer preference for the jewelry , show traditional Thai architecture, product features, Brand marketing campaign

, and interviews with the brand owner. These videos highlighted cultural uniqueness from multiple angles and provided real-world data to examine the logic of the hypotheses. The data analysis focused on Two key dimensions: exposure level, interaction intensity.

Table 14 TIKTOK USER ANALYSIS

Video Content	Number of Video Views	Completion Rate
Brand Introductions	538	6.93%
User Interaction Content	313	3.27%
Show Traditional Thai Architecture	957	12.72%
Product Features	408	14.14%
Brand Marketing Campaign	347	8.5%
Interviews with the Brand Owner	448	1.61%

The dissemination of cultural content has become the key basis for verifying H1: Using cultural content on TikTok to enhance brand recognition. Data shows that videos showcasing traditional Thai architecture have been viewed 957 times, with a completion rate of 12.72%, both of which are the highest for cultural content. This type of content, rich in unique cultural elements, has a strong appeal to users' attention, significantly expanding the brand's reach and confirming that cultural content can effectively enhance brand exposure and recognition efficiency.

Table 15 TIKTOK USER ANALYSIS

Video Content	Number of Likes	Number of Comments
Brand Introductions	42	40
User Interaction Content	35	41
Show Traditional Thai Architecture	50	25
Product Features	38	42
Brand Marketing Campaign	40	49
Interviews with the Brand Owner	41	51

The video showcasing traditional Thai architecture received 50 likes, the highest number for cultural content. The number of likes reflects users' emotional connection to the content. Cultural content, leveraging the uniqueness of Thai architecture, evokes stronger emotional resonance, indicating that users engage with the brand through cultural content, indirectly demonstrating that cultural content can expand brand reach and enhance brand awareness. Although the number of comments (25) is relatively low, when combined with the view count (Using cultural content on TikTok to enhance brand recognition), it supports the claim that cultural content attracts users and brings the brand into the public eye, providing evidence for H1: Cultural content drives user attention and helps enhance brand recognition.

'Interviews with the Brand Owner '41 likes and 51 comments, both of which are relatively high numbers. As the personification of the brand, the brand owner interacts with users. The number of comments reflects users' willingness to engage in dialogue and exchange, while the number of likes reflects emotional connection. This indicates that such interactive content can bridge the gap between the brand and users and build a foundation of trust. Discussions among users about the brand's credibility in the comments provide evidence for H3 Building a trust-based brand relationship through TikTok engagement.

4.3. A Comparison of Chinese TikTok and Instagram Data: A Case Study of Sawasdee Gems and Punika Jewellery

In order to test the research hypothesis, the brand Punika Jewellery, in collaboration with Sawasdee Gem, maintained an official account on Instagram. Meanwhile, related video content was also published on Chinese TikTok. This setup enabled a comparative analysis of user engagement and audience response across the two platforms.

Table 16 TIKTOK CONTENT ANALYSIS

Punika Jewellery's data on Chinese TikTok		
	Number of Likes	Number of Comments
Product Features	40	49
Interviews with the Brand Owner	41	51

Table 17 INSTAGRAM CONTENT ANALYSIS

Punika Jewellery's data on Instagram		
	Number of Likes	Number of Comments
Brand Introduction 1	17	0
Brand Introduction 2	11	0
User Interaction Content	7	0
Product Poster 1	11	1

Table17(Continue)

Product Introduction 1	20	1
Product Introduction 2	12	0
Product Introduction 3	12	0
Product Poster 2	14	0
Product Poster 3	6	0

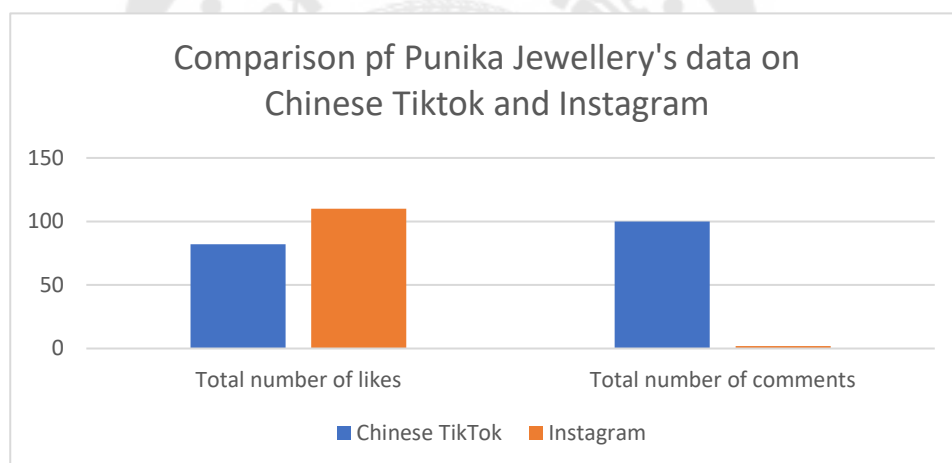


Figure 2 : COMPARISON OF PUNIKA JEWELLERY'S DATA

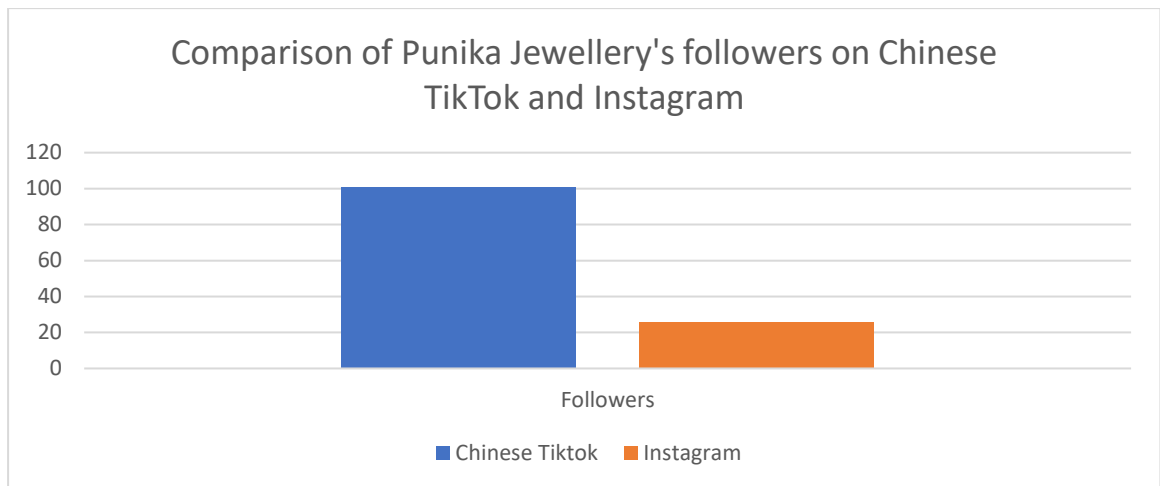


Figure 3 COMPARISON OF PUNIKA JEWELLERY'S DATA

Based on the data analysis, Chinese TikTok performs better than Instagram in both content interaction and follower growth. Although Punika Jewellery only posted two videos on Chinese TikTok, they received a total of 81 likes and 100 comments. On average, each video had much higher interaction than those on Instagram. On Instagram, the brand posted 9 videos, including brand introduction, product introduction, user interaction, and posters. However, the total interaction was low, with only 110 likes and 2 comments. This shows that Chinese TikTok is more effective in encouraging user engagement. Users not only liked the content but also actively left comments, creating deeper feedback and community connection.

In terms of video quantity, Instagram had more content than Chinese TikTok. But this did not lead to better results. Instead, the videos had little impact. This means that more videos do not always bring more attention or interaction. On the other hand, Chinese TikTok had two videos, but the content matched user interests well. As a result, those videos received more views and feedback. This shows again that content quality is more important than quantity. Users prefer content that has cultural meaning, strong visual appeal, or emotional value.

Chinese TikTok's better performance in promoting cultural products is closely related to its algorithm. Chinese TikTok uses an interest-based recommendation system. It sends the right content to users who like similar topics. This helps the brand reach jewelry lovers and users interested in traditional culture. In contrast, Instagram depends more on social networks and hashtags. This system is less helpful when a brand is still new and has few followers. On Chinese TikTok, Punika Jewellery was able to get attention and feedback from the right users quickly, which made the content spread more effectively.

Finally, the follower numbers also show a clear difference between the two platforms. As shown in the chart, Punika has 101 followers on Chinese TikTok and only 24 on Instagram. This shows that Chinese TikTok helps brands grow their followers faster. It not only increases visibility but also turns viewers into real followers. More importantly, Chinese TikTok followers are gained through content, which means they are more interested and more likely to stay.

These results provide strong support for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3. The high exposure of cultural content on Chinese TikTok clearly helped raise brand awareness, as seen in the rapid follower growth and active engagement. At the same time, the high level of interaction—especially through comments—shows that user engagement on the platform plays a key role in building brand trust, which may positively influence purchase intention.

In conclusion, Chinese TikTok shows stronger performance in both user engagement and follower growth. Its interest-based system allows high-quality cultural content to reach the users quickly. This leads to more interaction and stronger attention from users.

4.4. Summary of the Findings

Table 18 SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES

Hypotheses	Accepted or rejected
H1: TikTok cultural content exposure has a positive impact on brand awareness.	Accepted
H2: Cultural narratives have a profound positive impact on purchasing intentions.	Accepted
H3: The intensity of interaction on Chinese TikTok positively influences brand trust and, in turn, promotes purchase intent.	Accepted

These data analyses clearly support the three hypotheses proposed in this study.

First, cultural content exposure on the Douyin platform has a positive impact on brand recognition, validating Hypothesis 1. Analysis of user behavior and content dissemination data shows that content focusing on Thai culture can effectively increase users' awareness and understanding of Thai jewelry brands, breaking through existing cognitive limitations.

Second, the positive effect of cultural narratives on purchase intent is empirically validated, confirming Hypothesis 2. The study found that content infused with cultural elements not only sparks user interest but also deepens user identification with the brand by conveying unique cultural values, thereby driving the formation of purchase intent.

Finally, there is a positive correlation between the interaction intensity on the Douyin platform and brand trust and purchase intention, confirming Hypothesis 3. Users' interaction behaviors on the platform (such as commenting and participating in

activities) can enhance trust in the brand, and this trust further promotes the formation of purchase decisions.

In summary, all research results fully validate the hypotheses, laying an empirical foundation for subsequent conclusions and recommendations.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1. Summary of the Study

This study focuses on exploring user behavior and attitudes regarding Thai jewelry on Chinese TikTok, aiming that relate to related to cultural marketing and brand communication. Employing a structured questionnaire, data were collected from 198 respondents, and the findings were analyzed through a theoretical framework informed by the CBBE model. The research aimed to validate hypotheses concerning the efficacy of social media in promoting culturally-rich products and to explore the practical implications for online retail operations.

5.2. Key Findings

Finding 1: Chinese TikTok is the main source through which Chinese consumers learn about Thai jewelry, playing a strong role in raising brand awareness

According to the data, 55.05% of respondents said their interest in Thai jewelry mainly came from Chinese TikTok. This is much higher than those influenced by friends' recommendations (35.35%) or film and TV content (35.35%). This shows that Chinese TikTok has a leading role in spreading content and shaping brand awareness. This finding directly supports Hypothesis 1 and aligns with Research Objective 1.

Finding 2: Consumers are highly sensitive to the cultural value behind Thai jewelry, and cultural storytelling strongly influences their willingness to buy

Among the factors that affect purchase interest, "cultural uniqueness" ranked first with 66.67%, ahead of design style (54.55%) and material quality (37.88%). This means that consumers care more about the cultural meaning behind the jewelry than just how it looks or its material. This result supports Hypothesis 2 and matches Research Objective 2.

Finding 3: High usage of Chinese TikTok provides a strong base for spreading brand culture and reaching users

72.72% of respondents use Chinese TikTok for more than 30 minutes daily, and 28.28% use it for over two hours a day. This shows strong user engagement and frequent exposure to content. This finding supports the practical use of Chinese TikTok to consistently share cultural content and build both brand awareness and emotional bonds, further validating the pathways suggested in Hypotheses 1 and 2.

Finding 4: Users prefer authentic and culturally rich content; stories about design and craftsmanship create strong emotional responses

When asked about the types of video content they found most interesting, 52.2% said they liked real-life scenes of temples or craftsmanship, and 51.52% liked cultural stories behind the products. This suggests that users are more likely to engage with content that feels real and has cultural depth. This finding not only supports Hypothesis 2 but also fits with Research Objective 2.

Finding 5: Interaction between official accounts and users builds a mixed trust system, which is key to increasing purchase willingness

74.24% of respondents said they prefer to buy Thai jewelry from official brand accounts on Chinese TikTok. Over half also stressed the importance of content authenticity and user reviews. This demonstrates that official posts, live streams, and user feedback on Chinese TikTok help build trust and mitigate concerns. This finding supports Hypothesis 3 and directly supports Research Objective 3.

5.3. Contributions

5.3.1. Theoretical Contribution:

Based on the core path of “Brand Meaning – Brand Response” in the CBBE model, this study identifies a key mechanism in cross-border cultural marketing: the link between cultural uniqueness and brand trust. Cultural uniqueness, delivered through differentiated content, builds the value base of brand trust. At the same time, trust supports the credibility of cultural storytelling. Together, they form a cycle of “value delivery – trust reinforcement” through user perception and behavior.

From the brand meaning perspective, the CBBE model states that brands should build unique value through product features and cultural symbols (Keller, 1993). In this study, the cultural uniqueness of Thai jewelry—such as traditional craftsmanship, ethnic design, and non-religious cultural stories—is the core part of brand meaning. The data shows that most respondents considered cultural uniqueness the most attractive factor, far exceeding design or material considerations. This proves that cultural uniqueness strongly affects how users understand and connect with the brand. When content clearly shows these unique values, users are more likely to believe in the cultural authenticity of the brand, which reduces their worry about false information. This belief is a sign that users trust the brand meaning, and it forms the foundation of trust.

From the brand response perspective, the CBBE model highlights “judgments” and “feelings” as user reactions to brand meaning. Among them, trust is one of the most important judgments. This study proposes a mixed trust system that combines official tools and user-generated content (UGC) to support cultural storytelling. Tools like live streaming from brand accounts and blockchain traceability give cultural content an official guarantee. At the same time, UGC—such as user experiences and reviews about craftsmanship—offers social proof that makes cultural stories more believable. The data shows that 74.24% of users prefer buying from official accounts, and that trust factors like “seller reliability” and “transparent reviews” play a key role in purchase decisions. This supports the idea that trust helps cultural storytelling work better.

The interplay between cultural content and trust creates a reinforcing cycle. Cultural uniqueness (brand meaning), shown through differentiated content, attracts users and lowers doubts. This helps build initial trust (brand response). As trust grows, users accept the cultural story more, follow the brand, and even share it. This in turn deepens the brand’s cultural meaning. For example, on TikTok, a video interview with the brand owner shares ideas of craftsmanship (cultural uniqueness) and receives 51

comments. These comments show users' trust. Some comments even praise the brand's cultural value, which helps other users believe the story is real. This builds even more trust and keeps the cycle going.

In summary, the "Brand Meaning – Brand Response" path in the CBBE model gives a useful way to understand cross-border cultural marketing. Cultural uniqueness is the value anchor of trust. Trust is what makes culture believable. Their cooperation not only explains why Thai jewelry performs well on TikTok, but also offers a model for other cross-border brands that rely on culture. It shows how value and trust can grow together in global branding.

5.3.2. Practical Contribution:

Providing Implementable TikTok Marketing Strategies for the Thai Jewelry Industry

Strategies proposed in the research, such as the "diversified cultural matrix model" (e.g., short videos of craftsmanship stories, live broadcasts by artisans) and the "hybrid trust guarantee mechanism" (official certification + user-generated content), directly address the practical dilemmas faced by the Thai jewelry industry on the Chinese TikTok platform, including homogenized content and trust crises. This strategy recommendations based on empirical analysis can help enterprises optimize content production, accurately reach young consumer groups, promote the transformation of Thai jewelry from the "single narrative of Buddha amulets" to "cultural diversified value output", and enhance the industry's competitiveness in the cross-border e-commerce market.

5.3.3. Social Contribution:

Promoting Sino-Thai Cultural Exchange and Constructing a Rational Consumption Ecosystem. By correcting the stereotyped cognition of Chinese university students in Thailand towards Thai jewelry, this study helps eliminate information bias in cultural communication, promotes the comprehensive display of Thai jewelry culture, and deepens Sino-Thai cultural mutual learning. Meanwhile, the design of a technology-empowered trust system (such as blockchain traceability visualization) can reduce information asymmetry in cross-border consumption, guide young consumers to form

rational shopping habits, and assist in constructing a transparent and trustworthy cross-border e-commerce consumption environment.

5.4. Implications for Future Practice/Application

5.4.1. Establish Trust Through Cultural Uniqueness

Highlight non-religious cultural symbols: Focus on traditional Thai craftsmanship (such as silver forging and gemstone inlay techniques), ethnic aesthetics (like Lanna-style carving or floating market patterns), and everyday cultural inspiration (such as designs linked to Songkran and Loy Krathong festivals). Avoid overusing religious elements like Buddha amulets. This aligns with the research goal of breaking the stereotypical “amulet-centered” narrative.

1. Content design suggestions:

- a. Create a “Craftsmanship Tracing” series to emphasize both the authenticity of raw materials and the complexity of traditional techniques.
- b. Develop “Cultural Scene” short videos that showcase jewelry paired with traditional Thai clothing (e.g., Thai-style sarees), or worn in cultural spaces such as Wat Arun. These visual storytelling techniques aim to enhance cultural immersion and strengthen user recognition of non-religious cultural value.

2. Align Content with TikTok’s Algorithm

- a. Innovate interaction formats: Launch a “Thai Jewelry Styling Challenge,” encouraging users to style themselves with Thai jewelry and explain the cultural inspiration behind their look. Use the hashtag #ThaiJewelryStyleChallenge to increase reach through TikTok’s challenge mechanism.

Host live sessions like “Craftsmanship Q&A,” where the host asks questions such as “What are the three main traits of traditional Thai metalwork?” Users who answer correctly can receive coupons or rewards.

- b. Optimize for algorithm exposure: Include targeted keywords in video titles. Add hashtags such as #ThaiCraftsmanship and #CulturalJewelry in the description.

Use TikTok's interest-based recommendation system to reach jewelry lovers and culturally engaged users more accurately.

3. Support Cultural Storytelling with a Trust-Building Mechanism

a. Use authoritative content: Publish interviews with brand owners focusing on brand heritage and cultural mission (e.g., “bringing Thai craftsmanship out of temples and into daily life”). This supports findings that official accounts serve as strong anchors of trust.

Share videos of the production process, highlighting details like artisan hand-engraving or gemstone inspection, to visually assure users of product authenticity.

b. Design user-generated content (UGC) strategies: Launch the hashtag #MyThaiJewelryStory, encouraging users to share personal moments wearing Thai jewelry during Thai–Chinese cultural events. Selected high-quality content can be re-posted by the official account, with cultural handbooks sent as gifts.

Create a “User Review Program” that invites customers to film unboxing videos with cultural explanations (e.g., “This pattern is inspired by traditional Thai river transport symbols”). These authentic user voices reinforce trust and support the mixed trust mechanism framework.

4. Strengthen Visual Identity and Official Branding Signals

a. Visual consistency strategy: On the TikTok profile, in addition to the verified badge, add a section clearly stating: “This is Punika's only official account in China. All others are unofficial.”

Standardize video covers by including the brand logo and a “Punika Official” watermark—e.g., placing a subtle “officially certified” badge in the corner of product close-ups—to help users remember and recognize the brand.

b. Reinforce official identity through scripts: At the beginning or end of each video, include fixed phrases such as: “Please purchase only through our verified TikTok account. We support 7-day returns and official authentication.” This reduces confusion with unofficial sellers and builds user confidence.

5. Educate Users and Convert Non-Official Traffic into Trust

To guide users in identifying authentic products and reduce the risk of misidentifying unofficial channels, the brand should create a clear and accessible video series titled “How to Spot Authentic Thai Jewelry.” Topics can include: -How to check materials and craftsmanship. -How to recognize official product designs. These short videos will help build basic user knowledge and redirect traffic toward official accounts.

5.5. Research Limitations

5.5.1 Sampling Limitations

This study collected 198 valid responses, which meet the basic requirements for quantitative research. However, most of the participants were Chinese university students currently living in Thailand. The survey also focused only on Chinese TikTok. This may lead to platform-based bias. The results may not represent user behavior and cultural acceptance on other social media platforms such as Instagram. Therefore, the generalizability and external validity of the findings are limited.

5.5.2 Methodological Limitations

This research used a self-administered questionnaire to collect data. While this method helped to capture user perceptions, preferences, and behavioral tendencies efficiently, it may have been influenced by subjective factors such as social desirability bias. Some responses might not fully reflect participants' true attitudes. In addition, the study did not include qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews. Without triangulation, it is difficult to explore the deeper motivations behind users' perceptions of cultural value.

5.6. Conclusion

This study confirms that Chinese TikTok is an effective platform for promoting Thai jewelry culture and driving cross-border sales. Specifically, TikTok breaks cognitive barriers by disseminating diverse cultural content—such as traditional craftsmanship and ethnic design—which helps users move beyond the narrow “Buddha amulet” narrative to recognize Thai jewelry as a carrier of multicultural heritage. The data

highlights that cultural narratives drive market acceptance: "cultural uniqueness" emerged as the most appealing attribute, far exceeding design or material quality, and TikTok's short-video and live-stream formats enable brands to vividly convey Thailand's cultural stories, thereby stimulating purchase intentions. Additionally, trust mechanisms enable sustainable growth: the "official + UGC" trust model addresses cross-border transaction concerns, with TikTok's interactive features (e.g., live streams, comments) strengthening user confidence in authenticity and value, as users show a clear preference for purchasing through official accounts. Overall, the findings demonstrate that TikTok's algorithmic precision, user preference for cultural content, and interactive ecosystem make it a powerful tool for Thai jewelry startups to enter the Chinese market. The "cultural content + trust building" framework validated in this study provides a replicable model for other niche cultural products seeking cross-border success in the digital age.



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