

# Analysis on the Development Status and Innovation Strategy of Online Tourism Customized Products

--Take Ctrip and Lvmama for example

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**Abstract:** Driven by the rapid development of information technology, the upgrading of consumer concepts and the strong demand for personalization, the tourism market is changing rapidly, and tourism, especially customized tourism, has become a choice for more people to travel. This paper is committed to solving the deficiencies of online customized tourism products. By using literature review, investigation analysis and case analysis, some design defects of Lvmama and Ctrip have been solved, and the original design logic has been updated to improve user experience. Strengthen the connection between the customization industry and the tourism industry, and make use of new technology to make content more in line with user expectations; Solutions that leverage emerging technologies to deepen the connection between users and customizers. The research results can provide innovative and improved ideas for Lvmama, Ctrip and all kinds of customized tourism products to improve the travel experience of the general public.

## 1. Introduction

Driven by the rapid development of information technology, the upgrading of consumer concepts and the strong demand for personalization, the tourism market is undergoing a sharp change, and tourism, especially customized tourism, has become a travel choice for more people. The progress of science and technology and the arrival of the Internet age have made more and more people get used to using the Internet and mobile communication equipment to make Suggestions for travel. In the face of the new changes in the tourism market, some online tourism suppliers try to give play to their resource advantages and combine online tourism production methods and new customized tourism products again, so as to realize the desire of tourism consumers for personalized travel. Online tourism development customization has become the latest development trend of major tourism companies.

Online tourism customization refers to the consumer-centered tourism product design according to the individual needs of consumers. These products have become the main feature of many online travel websites and clients. However, in the initial trial and exploration, the product transformation failed due to its weak technical and financial strength, lack of in-depth exploration of consumer demand, insufficient attention to user experience and other reasons. Nowadays, online tourism product customization still has some problems such as difficulty in matching user needs. Many literatures have pointed out the shortcomings of online travel customization market under the guidance of business. For example, Nie Qilu (2017) pointed out that it is difficult to control the market positioning and product quality of traditional OTA agents, thus reducing customers' trust in the online tourism market [1].

Although the drawbacks of the online travel market have been proposed as early as three years ago, there is still a gap in terms of the drawbacks and improvement measures in the customized products. This paper analyzes the above problems and puts forward some innovative strategies. This paper combines literature review method, investigation analysis method and case analysis method, takes the existing customized tourism products of Ctrip and Lvmama as examples for investigation and analysis, expounds the current situation of the development of customized online tourism

products, explores the existing problems, and proposes innovative market strategies.

## **2. Methodology**

Through investigation and research, combined with the operation of two typical websites, Ctrip and Lvmama, this paper proposes the following three research methods:

### **2.1 Literature Review Method**

Literature review mainly refers to the collection, identification, collation of literature, and the formation of a scientific understanding of facts through the study of literature. By referring to a large number of relevant articles, journals and books, the author analyzes online customized tourism websites such as Ctrip and Lvmama, thus laying the theoretical foundation of this paper.

### **2.2 Survey Analysis Method**

The survey analysis method refers to the method by which researchers know the detailed information of things directionally and randomly by means of field interview, question-and-answer investigation and so on, and then analyze it. In the context of the epidemic, it is not appropriate to conduct work in the form of offline interviews. In this paper, the advantages and disadvantages of online customized tourism of Ctrip and Lvmama were investigated by referring to previous research results and tourism industry analysis reports over the years, so as to make the conclusions and strategies more realistic. In the form of network survey, data lag may be caused and sample deviation caused by interference factors cannot be controlled manually.

### **2.3 Case Analysis**

Case analysis method is a method to analyze a single object in combination with literature and obtain the general and universal rules of things. Foreign countries have a large number of various types of tourism software, due to historical factors, its breadth and depth are beyond the domestic online tourism version. For example, the National Geographic World Atlas, a travel inspiration APP based on maps, TheTake, an APP famous for its interest and details, and the online version of LonelyPlanet, an old travel guide magazine APP, have met the travel needs of different types of tourists. Their success is worth learning from. This paper will draw lessons from the foreign Airbnb software represented by the organic combination of Google Map ecology to meet the accommodation needs; At the same time, it will also assist to analyze some foreign software similar to Ctrip, such as Kayak, to analyze the differences between China's Ctrip and Lvmama travel websites.

## **3. Results**

### **3.1 Development Status of Online Customized Tourism Products in China**

Compared with the mature customized tourism market in Europe and the United States, China's customized tourism market started late but developed rapidly. Starting from 2016, more and more travel consumers start to choose customized travel modes instead of traditional travel modes. In the online questionnaire survey, nearly 93% respondents expressed the expectation and willingness to try customized tourism[2]. In terms of the current classification of customized tourism products, it is mainly divided into the following three categories.

First, the primary customized tourism products. According to the funds used by tourists to travel activities as the standard, for its appropriate price of air tickets and hotel products.

The second category is themed customized tourism products. A certain theme tour itinerary designed by a travel agency for a certain niche tourism group from time to time.

The third category, "one on one" customized travel products. Where tourists go, where they live, and what they eat are customized. Tourism enterprises communicate with tourists in a "one-to-one" manner, completely following the needs of tourism consumers to customize "pure customized tourism products".

### 3.2 Analysis of Existing Customized Tourism Products -- Taking Ctrip and Lvmama as Examples

Ctrip[3] and Lvmama travel[4] are analyzed from five aspects, including menu bar setting, customized tour classification, customized process, recommendation of travel customization and customized service mode. The main contents are shown in Table 1.

Starting from Chengdu, the destination was Dali and Lijiang, the journey time was 6.05 to 6.10, a total of 5 days, with 2 people travelling. The customized tourism products on Ctrip and Lvmama travel were compared, and the main contents were shown in Table 2.

Table 1 Comparison between Ctrip and Lvmama

Category	Ctrip	Lvmama
The location of the menu bar	“Customized Tours” are classified under the category of “Tours” in the menu bar on the home page of the website, not in the first-level menu bar	“Customized Tour” has a separate option in the homepage, which belongs to the first-level menu bar
Customized tour classification	It can be divided into individual customization and group building company customization	It can be divided into two categories: customized Tours for individuals and customized Tours for enterprises
Order process	Fill in customized requirements -- free delivery plan according to requirements -- have a special guide to communicate and confirm the itinerary with tourists -- sign a travel contract and prepare for the trip	Fill in customized requirements -- free delivery plan according to requirements -- communication and confirmation of itinerary by special guides and tourists -- travel by contract
Travel customization recommended	According to the region to customize the division of recommendation	Customize according to the type of trip recommended by the designer
Customized service mode	1. Submit travel customization demand orders online 2. Directly select the customized planner on the platform 3. Select the recommended case route of the platform 4. Select the module customization route	1. Submit travel customization demand orders online 2. Directly select the customized planner on the platform 3. Select the platform recommendation case type

Table 2 Comparison of Customized Travel Products between Ctrip and Lvmama

Category	Ctrip	Lvmama
The main tour	D1: Departure place - Kunming - pick up by special person - check in At Mengjing Rainbow Art Hotel. All day meals will be paid by yourself D2: Train from Kunming to Dali -- visit the three towers of Chongsheng Temple + The ancient city of Dali (including Yangren Street), and live by the sea of Dali Erh D3: Dali -- Lijiang, erhai lake cruise ship around Erhai Lake + Xizhou Bai folk dwellings + Zhoucheng tie-dye D4: Yulong Snow Mountain scenic spot, take the grand ropeway of Glacier Park, visit Lanyue Valley, Ganhaizi, watch the performance of Impression Lijiang -- stay in the old town of Lijiang at night D5: Complete the journey and return to the departure point (excluding the air ticket)	D1: Departure - Kunming - pick up by hand - check in at the hotel (Kunming Hot Spring Hotel), and pay for all day meals by yourself D2: Xishan Scenic Area of Kunming (free scenic cable car) -- Walking on Xishan Mountain of Kunming, overlooking The Dianchi Lake -- Dining: dustpan feast/Nanjian jumping vegetables -- Dali Bai artisan workshop, experience tie-dye, armour horse, milk fan, tea making techniques - Lijiang, lijiang Hotel D3: Yulong Snow Mountain - 4680m glacier tunnel - Blue Moon Valley, visit Yunnan Small Jiuzhaigou - eat snow kitchen buffet - stay in lijiang old town inn or hotel - visit Lijiang old town - experience Lijiang bar carnival night - Lijiang Hotel D4: La-shi-Hai (self-care on horseback) -- Double Gallery -- take erhai boat, land and visit Nanzhao Style Island -- experience Bai cuisine -- stay at Erhai Seaview Hotel D5: Send the plane according to the flight time -- return to your sweet home
The reference price	3800/ person	A group discussion

## **4. Comparative Analysis of Advantages and Disadvantages of Ctrip and Lvmama**

### **4.1 Advantage Analysis:**

Ctrip: (1) according to the geographical division of the planning, clear, convenient for users to find their target routes.(2) It has high-end customization classification to quickly distinguish different price points, so that users can get their ideal solutions.(3) Provide reference quotation to provide customers with psychological expectations.(4) Routes can be selected by module to enhance uniqueness and user experience.(5) The home page has a collection of famous tourist cities and user evaluation. The tourist sites are often relatively small and fresh scenic spots, which can stimulate tourism inspiration; The user evaluation is relatively objective.

Lvmama : (1) customized tour located in the first level menu, convenient for users to find.(2) According to the classification of travel types, users with different needs can be diverted to make subsequent services more accurate.(3) Home page at a glance, each demand users can quickly find their goals. If the hotel ticket destination are classified, concise and clear.(4) Customized Tours have a “customized” page, which can stimulate users' interest and introduce the travel costs, etc., so that users can have a certain psychological estimate.

### **4.2 Weakness Analysis:**

Ctrip: (1) customized Tours are not included in the first-class menu, which reflects the company's relatively low attention to customized Tours and still has not broken through the past standardized and large-scale business thinking, making it difficult for users to quickly find the content they care about in the first place.(2) Although there are sub-module contents, there are still too few contents to be independently selected. Still need to choose from the platform recommended content, failed to highlight the platform's customized tour features. Even for high-end customized Tours, the essence of which is to choose existing routes with low degree of freedom.(3) There are errors in page design. The front page is more focused on promoting hotels and tourist destinations, while people who often use Ctrip have already set the destination; At the same time, the recommended hotels do not correspond to the special needs. It can be seen that although customized Tours have been the trend, the home page does not highlight this element, and fails to meet the needs of customers.

Lvmama: (1) there are too few options for customized Tours. Only four popular routes for the current part of the route display. But the four routes, two of which are separate cities, are too deep with the same texture; At the same time, only a few options are included in the choice of travel time and region, and the independent choice of tourists is quite limited. More custom content must send messages to communicate with the customizer.(2) As the customized information can only be sent to contact with the customized designer, it cannot be used for simple or partial tour route display according to the information, resulting in the lack of awareness of the customization method and effect, and the information on the website is too little, only covering up to 10% of the user needs.

## **5. Problems in Customized Tourism Products**

Through comparative analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the two travel websites, specific problems existing in customized tourism products can be obtained, and the analysis is as follows:

### **5.1 Serious Homogenization**

Large number of do not conform to the standards of custom travel agencies into custom tourism product market, more and more tourism industry practitioners into the custom planner, but most of the custom tourism planners by reference to examples of existing design custom tourism product line, caused the “plagiarism” to each other as a result, make the customized product homogeneity on the market of the existing tourism. Take Table 2 as an example, D3 itinerary in Ctrip plan is similar to D2 itinerary in Lvmama plan, and D4 itinerary in Ctrip plan is similar to D3 itinerary in Lvmama plan. The two plans have a total of 5 days of travel, with 2 of the remaining 3 days of travel being

similar, except for 1 day at the beginning and 1 day at the end. Similar itineraries often occur in the current market for customized travel products.

## **5.2 Low Degree of Customization Leads to Low User Satisfaction**

Platform customization services are all based on the big data matching between the existing resources of the platform and the needs of tourists. In the process of user submission, users can only express their rough needs, but cannot complete the real customization, leading to the lower satisfaction of tourists to the final customized tourism products in the later period.

## **5.3 Tourists Interact Less with Custom Planners**

Due to the fact that customized information can only be sent to contact with customized engineers, and the lack of a special communication platform, the communication and interaction between tourists and customized engineers is low, and tourists cannot fully and clearly express their personalized tourism needs.

## **6. Discussion**

Optimization of online tourism customization product innovation strategy in China

This paper compares and analyzes the differences between China's Ctrip and Lvmama by drawing on the successful typical cases of foreign travel apps, especially the successful experiences of National Geographic World Atlas, TheTake, Lonely Planet, etc., and proposes the following improvement strategies.

### **6.1 Optimize the Customized Tour Menu on the Platform and Share Travel Experience**

Make the custom tour one of the core contents on the main menu and set it as a level 1 menu; The second-level menus are divided into tourist destinations in different regions and countries. The three-level menu is classified according to different needs of customers. Each category of the three-level menu provides examples of customized results before customization to provide customers with psychological expectations.

At the same time, the sharing of personal travel experience on the tourism platform enables tourism consumers to fully learn from and redesign customized tourism based on their personal demands, so as to achieve the differentiation of tourism products and improve customer satisfaction.

### **6.2 Strengthen the Two-Way Cooperation between the Tourism Industry and the Customization Industry, and Conduct in-Depth “Data Mining” for Tourists**

Deeply cultivate the tourism industry and realize the professional upgrading of tourism talents. Through the entry of some experienced tour guides into the customization industry, the two-way cooperation between tour guide and customization can be realized. On the one hand, the business level and service level of tourism customization can be improved; on the other hand, the personal experience of tour guides can be used for reference to make the customization scheme more mature. This two-way cooperation has built a diversified, professional and informationized talent pool for the tourism industry.

In the era of big data, with the rise and promotion of smart tourism, in-depth “data mining” on the needs and behaviors of tourism consumers is the key link to follow the trend of “Internet +” era and realize the transformation and upgrading and leapfrog development of the tourism industry. For example, by deploying mobile signal detection equipment on customized tour routes, counting the relevant behavioral attributes of customized tour groups, monitoring the movement trajectory of tourists and the browsing situation of different scenic spots, traffic routes between different scenic spots can be reasonably designed and tourism products can be sold.

### **6.3 The Internal Real-Time Communication Platform is Designed to Enhance the Two-Way Interaction between Customizers and Tourists**

Modern network communication technology has realized electronization, automation and

mechanization, providing a good platform for the implementation of experience marketing. With the help of modern computer network technology, Ctrip or Lvmama can build an internal communication platform for customizers to communicate with customers in real time. To a great extent, the inconvenience of traditional media can be replaced, so that the process of customizers can better meet the needs of users, and thus improve the satisfaction of consumers in the process of customized tourism.

The research results of this paper are similar to those of the existing literature, but it innovatively enriches the existing literature research results and deepens and expands the existing research directions. However, due to the lack of field investigation of first-hand data due to the epidemic, the data used in this paper are from the Internet. However, the data adopted are authoritative data on the official website, which ensures the accuracy and reliability of data analysis. In the course of future research, this paper will provide ctrip, Lvmama and any enterprises interested in customized tourism industry with reform and development inspiration, so as to make the project practical, extensive and professional.

## **7. Conclusion**

By combing through a large number of online tourism literature, this paper innovatively makes comparative analysis on the advantages and disadvantages of the tourism network, so as to explore the problems existing in online customized products of the tourism market and improve measures, and make up for the gaps in existing literature.

Through the analysis of typical data from Ctrip and Lvmama travel, problems in customized tourism products are found, such as lack of attention to customized tourism and not highlighting customized tourism in the main menu, serious homogeneity, low degree of customization, lack of communication between tourists and planners, etc. Aiming at the above problems, this paper puts forward the improvement strategies of optimizing the customized menu, strengthening the cooperation between the tourism industry and customized designers, and strengthening the communication between the two sides with instant messaging. Further exploration of China's customized tourism market should be strengthened in the future in order to promote the healthy, sustainable and rapid development of China's customized tourism market.

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