A Case Study of Intellectual Property Rights Using Animation Characters

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애니메이션 캐릭터를 활용한 Intellectual Property 사례 연구

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Abstract Recently, with the development of convergent media, the digital animation industry has developed a variety of content centered on the role of Intellectal Property. The excellent IP role image has created huge economic benefits in business. This paper selects three representative Intellectual Property animation cases from Japan, the United States and China. Analyzed of the reuse of IP animation character images and combined with the era technology and the style of culture and art, the traditional cultural IP roles are reconstituted into modern character design two aspects. Through the research of this paper, can understand the expansion possibility of IP animation according to the use of character image. It is expected that when making digital animation, can recognize the importance of intellectual property and use it as a reference for role development.

Key Words : Intellectual Property, Digital Animation, IP character image, Modern Character Design, Character Development

요 약 최근 융합 미디어의 발전에 따라 디지털 애니메이션 산업은 Intellectual Property(지식 재산) 캐릭터를 중심으로 다양한 산업분야에서 많은 콘텐츠를 개발하였다. 광고 및 홍보물 뿐 아니라 Intellectual Property 디지털 애니메이션도 마니아층의 지지와 사랑을 받았다. 우수한 Intellectual Property 캐릭터 이미지가 상업적으로 큰 경제 수익을 창출한다는 통계도 있다. 본 연구는 일본, 미국, 중국의 세 개 대표적인 Intellectual Property 애니메이션 사례를 선택하여 각각 Intellectual Property 애니메이션 캐릭터 이미지 재활용 및 시대적 기술과 문화예술 스타일을 결합해 전통문화 IP 캐릭터를 현대적 캐릭터 디자인으로 재구성하는 두 측면에서 분석하였다. 본 논문 연구를 통해 캐릭터 이미지 활용 방식에 따라 IP 애니메이션의 확장 가능성을 알 수 있었다. 디지털 애니메이션 제작 시 Intellectual Property에 대한 중요성을 인지하고 캐릭터 개발 시 참고 자료가 되기를 기대한다.

주제어 : Intellectual Property, 디지털 애니메이션, IP 캐릭터 이미지, 현대적 캐릭터 디자인, 캐릭터 개발

1. Introduction

1.1 Research background and purpose

With the advent of the era of integrated media, IP[1] animation has begun to become a hot spot on the development of animation .Since the rise of IP concept in American animation industry in 1990,[1] IP animation has formed an integrated industry integrating many industries. This has established a certain degree of commercial foundation for the character image of IP animation.

Drive by the Internet big data model, A large number of IPs are constructed by animation producers through various financial media platforms interact with consumer groups, and through large database statistics and calculus.[2] Therefore, different animated character images of the same IP with different styles in various fields appeared.
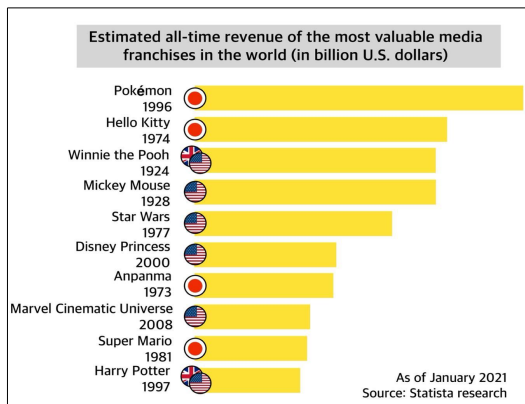

Fig. 1. Estimated all-time revenue of the most valuable media franchises in the world in 2021(in billion U.S. dollars)

As a kind of media, animation is expanding and developing in more and more forms of the evolution of modern society.[3] Fig 1. as of January 2021, in the estimated all-time revenue

1) 'IP' is the abbreviation for Intellectual Property. Including the three components of copyright, patent rights and trademark right.

of the most valuable media franchises in the world, international well-known IP cartoon images such as Pokémon, Hello Kitty, Winnie the Pooh and Mickey Mouse have brought tens of billions of dollars in revenue. This shows that the potential for IP animation to drive economic development is huge. Therefore, in order to promote the commercial development of IP animation, further understanding of the creation style of the image of IP characters will also become an important task for the development of IP animation.

1.2 Research methods

This paper research and analyzes a large number of advanced papers and materials, and summarizes the main classification of the IP adaptation animations. By combining three international well-known IP character image cases, analyzes the two common IP image utilization method of IP animation character image reuses and traditional IP character image remodeling, and also analyzes the characteristics of the design elements incorporated in the transformation of the character image.

2. Theoretical research

2.1 Theoretical Research on IP Animation

'IP animation' is an animation created around the image of a planned way when creating animation.[4] When certain character image characteristics in animation are loved by the public, and when these animated images have product IP attributes and can bring commercial value, animation creators will create new animations around these IPs.

IP animations adapted to IP in different fields common to life are mainly divided into five categories : Literary IP Adaptation, Game IP adaptation, Comic IP Adaptation, Animation IP

adaptation , Emoji package IP adaptation.

Table 1. Classification of IP adapted animation [5]

Literary IP Adaptation
Monkey King: Hero is Back
IP is adapted to the four masterpieces of Chinese literature "Journey to the West"

Game IP adaptation
Angry Birds
IP is adapted to the American game Angry Birds

Animation IP adaptation
The Super Adventure
An IP animation film for the New Year of the Ox adapted to the Chinese children's cartoon "Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf"

Comic IP Adaptation
Tetsuwan Atom
Adapted from the manga "Tetsuwan Atom" serialized in Japanese manga magazines from 1952 to 1968

Emoji package IP adaptation
Kakao friends Animated weight scales advertisement
KAKAO FRIENDS originated from the emoji package launched by the Korean mobile chat tool Kakao Talk, [6] then gradually launched a series of small IP animations and derivatives.

3. A case study of IP animation character shaping

This article divides the extensibility shaping methods of animated IP characters into two types: IP animation character image reuse and traditional IP character image remodeling.

3.1 IP animation character image reuse

IP animation character image reused is a common form of animation. It means that auxiliary characters (supporting characters) appearing in animation are loved by the audience, and the animation production team revolves around supporting characters to produce new animated movies with supporting characters as the main line.

Table 2. IP 'Kaitou Kiddo' and 'Minions' character image utilization

Name	Original animation	IP character	IP animation
Detective Conan			
Despicable Me			

<Detective Conan> is a reasoning-based 2D animation adapted from a comic. Kiddo is an auxiliary character (supporting character) who appears as a thief occasionally in the plot of <Detective Conan>, and is called <Kaitou Kiddo> in the animation. Afterwards, Japanese cartoonist '青山剛昌'（あおやま ごうしょう） created a comic <まじっく快斗> with 'Kaitou Kiddo' as the main storyline around the IP image of 'Kaitou Kiddo', which was later adapted into the animation <まじっく快斗1412> and released in October in 2014 . [7]

The character 'Minions' is a supporting role in the 3D animation film <Despicable Me> released in the United States in July 2010, [8] After the animation film was released, due to the audience's high degree of love for the IP character of the cute 'Minions', subsequently, the IP character film 'Minions' was produced and released.

Table 2. They are all according to the IP character image 'Kaitou Kiddo' and 'Minions' is produced with the form of animation reproduced IP animation. Among them, the birth to the IP character 'Kaitou Kiddo' has the same insight as the detective and the physical performance and deduction ability as a magician. Therefore, it has a similar attraction to the 'detective fans' who love the <Detective Conan>. As of 2021, it has

also reached 150 million views on China's Tencent video platform.[2] The 'Minions' as a single-cell creature evolved hundreds of millions of years ago. There are a large number of characters in the animation. Although the appearance is simple, it has extremely rich performance capabilities.[9] It is an optimistic and positive character image. Therefore, it is deeply loved by the audience. On the first day of its release in China, the box office reached 121 million yuan[3], and the world's total box office reached 1.159 billion dollars.[10]

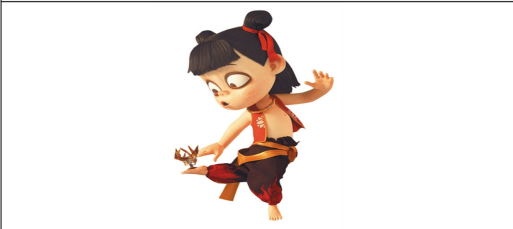## 3.2 Traditional IP character images remodeling.

The IP character 'Nezha' is taken from Chinese Ming Dynasty myths. The significance of myth lies in the continuous continuation of myth narration.[11] The Chinese animated films <Nezha naohai>, <The Legend Of Nezha>, and <Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child> are all reshaping of the IP character 'Nezha', which is a type of IP literary adaptation.

In Table 3. From 1979 to 2019, with the continuous improvement of the public's art appreciation ability and the development of computer technology, [13, 14] 'Nezha' IP animation film also gradually realized the transition from 2D to 3D. From <Nezha Naohai>, which incorporates Dunhuang cultural elements in its styling design in 1979, to <The Legend Of Nezha>, which incorporates Chinese national colors in 2003, to the <Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child> which integrates modern culture and computer graphics technology in 2019. Realize the inheritance and continuation of IP roles in different periods. Although the image of the IP character is constantly changing, it still retains a unified mythological cultural element in the shape.

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2) The data comes from the record of the broadcast volume of China's Tencent platform

3) Calculated in Chinese yuan

Table 3. 'Nezha' mythical IP animation images reshaping

IP animation
1979 Nezha Naohai
Traditional 2D animation film, the overall style of animation incorporates Dunhuang cultural elements

IP animation
2003 The Legend Of Nezha
Traditional 2D animation film, combining myths and historical facts, pay attention to the penetration of Chinese national colors[12]

IP animation
2019 Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child
Modern 3D animated film. The integration of national traditional culture and modernization

the 'detective fans' of the original animation (Detective Conan) and lovers of related storylines. Minions is not limited to a single character, but as a group. Each model is similar, but different from each other. Mainly rely on appearance and character personality to attract the audience. In the second aspect, the reshaping of the traditional IP image is a manifestation of cultural heritage. The animated characters derived from the traditional IP character "Nezha" is similar in personality, but there are great differences in appearance design. On the basis of inherent modeling elements, it integrates the cultural characteristics and computer graphics technology of various periods, and in this way realizes the remodeling of the traditional IP character image, creates a new IP animation plot, and realizes the continuation and innovation of the IP character. The different ways of using IP animation images make the expression effects of IP animation different. While ensuring the extensible application of IP character resources, it can also ensure the popularity of the new IP animation to a certain extent.

Animation as the core element of the digital content industry, [15] in today's society, the shaping of the role image of animation IP is not only limited to the animation industry. An excellent animated IP image can realize the cross-domain sharing of the value of IP roles. Hope that through the research of this paper, it can become a reference to the industry to continue to develop animation IP character shaping, and then promote the continuous and cross-domain development of IP characters.

4. Conclusion

In the case study results of animated IP characters, the first aspect is that the types of animations reproduced by IP animation characters also have diversified characteristics. 'Kaitou Kiddo' series animation relies on the suspense plot and character career setting of the original animation. The audience is mainly for

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