

## Spreading Japan's National Image through China during the Era of Mass Tourism: The Japan National Tourism Organization's Use of Sina Weibo

**Authors :** Abigail Qian Zhou

**Abstract :** Since China has entered an era of mass tourism, there has been a fundamental change in the way Chinese people approach and perceive the image of other countries. With the advent of the new media era, social networking sites such as Sina Weibo have become a tool for many foreign governmental organizations to spread and promote their national image. Among them, the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) was one of the first foreign official tourism agencies to register with Sina Weibo and actively implement communication activities. Due to historical and political reasons, cognition of Japan's national image by the Chinese has always been complicated and contradictory. However, since 2015, China has become the largest source of tourists visiting Japan. This clearly indicates that the broadening of Japan's national image in China has been effective and has value worthy of reference in promoting a positive Chinese perception of Japan and encouraging Japanese tourism. Within this context and using the method of content analysis in media studies through content mining software, this study analyzed how JNTO's Sina Weibo accounts have constructed and spread Japan's national image. This study also summarized the characteristics of its content and form, and finally revealed the strategy of JNTO in building its international image. The findings of this study not only add a tourism-based perspective to traditional national image communications research, but also provide some reference for the effective international dissemination of national image in the future.

**Keywords :** national image, international communication, tourism, Japan, China

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