

# Research on IP Operation Strategy of Domestic Single-Player Game Brand Expansion

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**Abstract:** Taking domestic single-player game brands as the research object, this paper discusses the value and strategy of single-player game brands expanding IP operation. It is found that single-player game brands expanding IP operation can improve brand awareness and influence, increase player stickiness and loyalty, and extend product life cycle and market vitality. In order to help single-player game brands expand IP operations, this paper puts forward four suggestions, such as creating core stories, hoping to provide some reference and inspiration for the development of domestic single-player game brands.

**Keywords:** Domestic Single-Player Games; Brand Expansion; IP Operation

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## Introduction

Single-player games have attracted the love and admiration of many players with their unique narrative, rich artistic expression, profound thematic ideas and high degree of freedom. However, domestic single-player game brands are facing many dilemmas and challenges in the market. How to enhance the competitiveness and influence of domestic single-player game brands is an urgent problem to be solved.

## 1. Domestic single-player game brand development status

### 1.1 Market size

Domestic single-player games are games on computer or console platforms produced by local Chinese game developers or individuals, and usually do not require an Internet connection to play. In recent years, domestic single-player games have made great progress in terms of creativity, quality, genres and styles, and have been recognised and loved by both domestic and foreign players. On Steam, the world's largest digital gaming platform, a number of domestically produced single-player games have received high ratings and good reputation, such as The Dyson Ball Project, Warm Snow, Immortal Sword and Sorcery 7, Ghosts of the Eight Wastelands, and so on. According to the China Game Industry Report 2022, it can be seen that the actual sales revenue of China's game market in 2022 was 265.884 billion yuan, a year-on-year decline of 10.33%, and the actual sales revenue of the single-player game market was 15.678 billion yuan, accounting for 5.9%, an increase of 3.523 billion yuan over 2021, a year-on-year increase of 28.9%. This shows that the share of the single-player game market in the overall game market is small, but the growth rate is faster, with greater potential and space<sup>[1]</sup>.

### 1.2 Product type and subject matter

From the perspective of product types, domestic single-player games are mainly dominated by role-playing games, strategy games, simulation and management games, shooting games, etc., covering the preferences and needs of different player groups. Among them, role-playing games occupy a larger market share, such as Immortal Sword & Chivalry 7 and Warm Snow. These games usually feature rich plots, diverse characters, free exploration and a strong sense of immersion, which can attract players to immerse

themselves in the virtual world. Strategy and simulation games also have many excellent masterpieces, such as "Dyson Ball Plan", etc. From the point of view of subject matter, domestic single-player games involve a variety of different styles and elements, such as sci-fi, fantasy, history, reality, horror, suspense and so on. Among them, sci-fi and fantasy themes are more common, such as the space exploration of Project Dyson Sphere and the martial arts world of Taiwu Echigo, etc. These themes are usually able to show imagination and creativity and create a unique game worldview<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **1.3 Brand image and influence**

With the continuous development of domestic single-player game brands, some excellent game developers or studios have gradually established their own brand image and influence, such as Game Science, Starcore Studio, BadMudStudio and so on. These brands usually have the following characteristics: Firstly, they focus on independent research and development and original design, and do not rely on external IP or platform resources to create game products with their own characteristics and style. Second, they focus on product quality and player experience, constantly optimising game graphics, sound effects, gameplay, plot and other aspects to improve game completion and reputation. Third, actively expand into overseas markets and integrate Chinese culture and elements into the game to increase the game's internationalisation and attractiveness. Fourth, maintain good communication and interaction with players, collect players' feedback and suggestions in a timely manner, and update the game content and functions to meet players' needs and expectations<sup>[3]</sup>.

## **2. Single-player game brands expand the value of IP operations**

### **2.1 Increase brand awareness and influence**

Single-player game brands expanding IP operations can increase brand exposure and coverage and enhance brand recognition and reputation through diversified content forms and channels, thus strengthening brand influence and competitiveness. For example, the Assassin's Creed series of games, by expanding IP forms such as film, animation, comics and novels, spreads the story and worldview of the game to a wider audience, and improves the brand's visibility and influence.

### **2.2 Increase player stickiness and loyalty**

Through rich content and experience, single-player game brands expanding their IP operations can meet the diverse needs and preferences of players, increase player engagement and satisfaction, and thus increase player stickiness and loyalty. Taking The Witcher series of games as an example, in the process of expanding IP forms such as novels, TV dramas and board games, it provides players with more characters, stories and emotional inputs, and the players' love for the brand has thus increased significantly<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **2.3 Extended product life cycle and market viability**

Single-player game brands expanding IP operation can achieve continuous content update and innovation, extend product life cycle and market vitality, and improve the brand's sustainable development ability. Take the Goddess of Anecdotes series of games as an example, through the exploration of handheld games, table games and other forms, it provides players with more ways to play and interact with each other, prolonging the product's life cycle and market vitality. In addition, this process also has a positive impact on cultivating the core player base and community culture, which can better meet the need to maintain the vitality and influence of single-player game brands.

## **3. Domestic Single-player Game Brand Expansion IP Operation Strategy**

### **3.1 Create a core story and build a story world**

For domestic single-player game brands to expand their IP operation strategies, they must create an attractive and influential core story so as to build a unique and rich story world. The core story refers to the main plot of the game, which is the soul and foundation of the game IP and determines the style, atmosphere, theme and values of the game. Building a story world refers to building a complete and consistent virtual world based on the core story, including various aspects such as worldview, history, geography, culture, characters, events, etc., which makes the game IP have more extensibility and possibilities<sup>[5]</sup>.

The purpose of creating a core story and building a story world is to immerse players in the game and create emotional resonance and identification, thus forming a love for and reliance on the game IP. For example, the "Immortal Sword & Chivalry" game series

has won the hearts of countless players with its moving core story and romantic story world. The core story of the "Immortal Sword and Chivalry" series of games is a love saga spanning over a thousand years, involving grudges and feuds in the three realms of immortals, devils and human beings, showing the light and darkness of human nature, and triggering players to think and feel about the themes of love, friendship, justice and sacrifice. The story world of the "Immortal Sword & Chivalry" series of games is a fantasy world based on ancient Chinese mythology, which contains a variety of mysterious places, fantastical items, legendary characters, thrilling events, etc., providing players with a game space full of imagination and desire for exploration.

### **3.2 Establishing a community atmosphere and fostering player loyalty**

A good community atmosphere can enhance users' sense of belonging, satisfaction and pride, promote communication and sharing among users, stimulate users' creativity and participation, and improve users' retention and recommendation rates, specifically need to focus on the following aspects:

First, provide diverse social platforms. Domestic single-player game brands can make use of various social media and network platforms, such as microblogging, weibo, posting, forums, live broadcasts, videos, etc., to release game-related information, activities, stories, behind-the-scenes, etc., to attract users' attention and discussion, and to increase users' understanding and recognition of the game IP. At the same time, these platforms can also be used to collect users' feedback and suggestions, respond to users' questions and needs in a timely manner, and enhance users' trust and goodwill towards the brand. For example, Black Myth: Goku has set up a special section on the NGA player community for posting content such as game trial videos and interacting with players.

Second, organise various activities. Domestic single-player game brands can design some interesting and meaningful activities, such as online and offline parties, competitions, exhibitions, performances, etc., according to the characteristics and themes of the game IP, and invite users to participate in them, so as to give them the opportunity to have face-to-face or virtual exchanges and interactions with other users, developers, voice actors and actresses. These activities can enhance users' emotional commitment and sense of belonging to the game IP, as well as expand the influence and popularity of the game IP. Black Myth: Wukong's 1,000-player offline demo event held on 20 August 2023 is representative of this. By allowing players to experience the game in advance and communicate with the development team, the Chinese single-player game accumulated a high level of popularity before its official release. This not only increases user satisfaction and loyalty to the game IP, but also creates more value and possibilities for the game IP.

### **Conclusion**

In the current digital media era, single-player game brands should not be limited to a single product form, but should make use of IP operation to build themselves into a cross-media story world and achieve multi-dimensional interaction and co-creation with players. Only in this way can they better enhance players' stickiness and loyalty, expand revenue sources and profit space, and extend product life cycle and market vitality, which needs to be highly valued and strongly supported by relevant practitioners.

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